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# Musical America

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## New Aida Opens Metropolitan Season

### Performance

By CECIL SMITH

FOR three or four years there has been talk in legitimate-theatre circles of producing a Broadway modernization of Verdi's *Aida*, under the title *My Darlin' Aida*. Charles Freeman, or whoever owns the idea now, might as well put the project on the shelf, for the Metropolitan Opera has stolen a march on him with its new *Aida*, designed by Rolf Gerard and staged by Margaret Webster. Revealed to the public on Nov. 13, the opening night of the Metropolitan's 67th season, the production, which might perhaps be retitled *My Tailored Aida*, is as chic and glossy in design as a Cole Porter musical comedy. It is staged fashionably, in that the groupings, gestures, and stances look trim and carefully prepared. It is admirably lighted and smoothly stage-managed; except between the two scenes of Act I, stage waits are eliminated, and all the machinery of production works well. But Mr. Gerard has not penetrated far into the substratum of the feeling-tone of the opera as Verdi's score makes it known to us, and Miss Webster, I should say, has scarcely scratched the surface. As a whole, the production achieves modishness at the expense of poignancy and emotional genuineness, and sometimes it does not even allow the story to be told intelligibly.

Despite the sterling conducting of Fausto Cleve, who gave the Metropolitan audience the most commanding interpretation of the score it has heard since the days of Tullio Serafin, the opening-night performance was wan and lifeless as drama, whatever superficial merits it may have had as spectacle. Except for the remarkable Amonasro of George London, who made his Metropolitan debut on this occasion, the principal roles were in the hands of artists who failed to make a good many points they should have. Possibly their obedience to Miss Webster's detailed instructions robbed them of ease and spontaneity. Whatever the reason, we have heard *Aida* sung better than this a good many times in recent years; and the ratty old 1923 stage settings and helter-skelter stage direction at least did not stand in the way, as Miss Webster's direction often did, of free communication of the meaning and emotional impulses of the story as Ghislanzoni and Verdi set it forth.

Zinka Milanov, in the title role, and Jerome Hines, as Ramfis, were familiar members of the cast. As Amneris, Elena Nikolaidi made her first Metropolitan appearance in a costume part; she had sung the contralto solos in Bruno Walter's two performances of Verdi's *Requiem* last March. Mario del Monaco, who made a single guest appearance as Des Grieux in Puccini's *Manon Lescaut* last season, returned to sing Radames as a regular mem-

ber of the company. Lubomir Vichogonov was the King of Egypt, Thomas Hayward the Messenger, and Lucine Amara the offstage Priestess. The choreography was devised by Zachary Solov, the Metropolitan's new head of the ballet, and Janet Collins made her debut as one of the company's two premières danseuses (the other is Maria Karnilova, scheduled to make her bow in Verdi's *La Traviata* on Nov. 24) in the Triumphal Scene. The chorus, well-trained but too small to stand the subdivision of the men's voices in the Triumphal Scene, was prepared by the Metropolitan's admirable chorus master, Kurt Adler.

MANY agreeable things can be said about Mr. Gerard's settings and costumes. The most tiresome clichés of traditional *Aida* design are happily absent, yet the motives and patterns seem consistent and sufficiently authentic—at least to one who is not an Egyptologist—to set the locale believably. The colors are harmonious, yet they are light and bright enough to make the mass scenes seem cheerful and festive, and they are elaborate and luxurious enough to suggest a degree of Egyptian prosperity that was worth defending against the threat of the invading Ethiopians. With the exception of the two final scenes, executed in a single unit that derives in style from 1930 German constructivism, the scenes are all pleasing in line and form—although the two scenes of Act I and the Triumphal Scene shrink the apparent size of the stage by using too much height in relation to the depth of the stage. The Triumphal Scene, built on the bias with interesting variations of level, and a striking green-blue cyclorama, is nevertheless a

(Continued on page 4)

### Occasion

By QUAINANCE EATON

THE 67th opening night of the Metropolitan Opera, Rudolf Bing's second as general manager, took place on Nov. 13 amid scenes of gaiety and enthusiasm, tempered with a decorum that was becoming to the occasion and the dignity of the house. Although the largest crowd in Metropolitan history surged around the house for an hour before the eight o'clock curtain time and for a considerable time afterwards, the management called it the most docile crowd ever encountered. Certainly it caused very little disturbance, although the press of onlookers was so great that ticket-holders had difficulty in entering the house, and the curtain was delayed—a compromise with the time-table reserved exclusively for opening night. Fausto Cleve stepped into the pit and raised his baton for the overture at twelve-and-one-half minutes past eight, but the auditorium was not filled to its capacity of 3,840 until an hour later. Stands had been admitted just before 7:30, and after the prescribed number of 250 had paid \$3 apiece and gained their cherished objective (75 were admitted to the Family Circle at \$1.80 apiece), 1,000 more remained in line, to be gradually dispersed by the house management and the police.

Because the performance was not televised, as the last three previous openings had been (mounting costs having deterred the former sponsor), the hectic atmosphere characteristic of spot telecasts was absent. This time the lobbies, lounges, and standing-room space were not cluttered by

cameras, wires, lights, and feverishly determined young men who muttered into mouthpieces or microphones and herded self-conscious individuals in and out of the cameras' range. Many, remembering the glare and confusion of other years, counted this a blessing; others regretted that a vaster audience could not share their pleasure. When I asked Mr. Bing, as he hastened down the corridor, whether he wished that the performance were being televised, he murmured cryptically, "I don't mind." The opera's television plans call for soberer, more considered activity, his administration believes. Some broadcasting occurred as a last-minute substitution for the American Broadcasting Company's TV ventures of other years, but it was confined to a pre-opera news spot and interviews with socialites as well as musical personalities.

Without benefit of microphone or camera, then, the bright pageant of Verdi's *Aida*, chosen for the eighth time in the company's history to launch a season, unfolded on the stage. In the intermissions, and, for that matter, during the performance, a full complement of patrons inhabited the redecorated bar and buffet, and were photographed under a blaze of lights, for magazines, news services, and newsreels. It was a youthful audience in large part, for many of the places formerly occupied by venerable society matrons were taken by beautiful young misses and their escorts, although representatives of the diplomatic, financial, military, and government worlds were prominent in the boxes and throughout the orchestra.

The spirit of youth and renewed hope also pervaded the box office, for the recent remission by Congress of the admission tax of twenty percent on each ticket has enabled the organization to count its intake with the assurance of keeping it all. Little fear was expressed about an informal ruling, issued the same day by the Office of Price Stabilization, that the Metropolitan and the symphony orchestras of the country were violating the price-control law in not returning the tax money to their patrons. Metropolitan officials felt that the clear intent of the law was to relieve non-profit musical groups to the amount of the tax.

For the first time, the opening night performance was presented as a separate unit, although precedent was broken last year by the removal of the performance from the Monday night subscription, when it was included in a three-event package. With the top price \$25, for an orchestra seat, the gross was \$53,112.10. The amount saved by the tax remission is one-sixth of this, Francis Robinson, of the administrative staff, explained, or almost \$9,000. Comparing the figure with last year's \$54,809.50, when the top price was \$30 plus tax, he added,

(Continued on page 4)



Serge Le Blanc

The Triumphal Scene in the Metropolitan's new production of Verdi's *Aida*



## Occasion

(Continued from page 3)

"If you're sold out you can't do better."

Subscriptions, too, are at an all-time peak, Mr. Robinson said. Although the percentage of increase has not yet been computed, more than \$1,300,000 has been received in subscription money. The fund of \$750,000, for which an active campaign has been carried on for several months, has been oversubscribed by \$112, according to George A. Sloan, chairman of the board.

THESE solid facts undoubtedly had a bearing on the excitement which ran like an electric current through the house every moment of the evening until long after the curtain fell at 11:31. There was a pleasant tingle about the occasion that seemed unique, possibly stemming partly from the renewed challenge thrown to the man who has survived the stormy course of his first season as general manager and from the willingness of the auditors to give him another vote of confidence. Also contributing to this atmosphere were the palpable good will and efficiency of the house staff and the experienced ushers, under the direction of Reginald S. Tonry, the house manager, and the hard-working press staff, headed by Margaret Carson, assisted by Anne Gordon and Louis Snyder.

The pressure had mounted all day, but at about four in the afternoon there came a breathing spell, a sort of quiet gathering of forces to be spent later. I paid a visit to the house to see the last-minute preparations and to sense the atmosphere of expectation that charged it, inside and out. The line of standees, as is customary, stretched from the front door on Broadway down to 39th Street, around the corner, and halfway across to Seventh Avenue. At the head of the line was James McManus, a 25-year-old photographer, who for the third time came the 621 miles from his home in Cleveland to stand for days in order that he might continue to stand for the four hours of the performance. He arrived at ten o'clock on Saturday evening, beating out Mrs. Dascha Paretzky, of Jackson Heights, who had been first in line for eight previous Metropolitan openings. Because Mr. McManus is to be called up soon by the National Guard, Mrs. Paretzky did not begrudge him his victory. Eager to talk and to be quoted, the leaders in the line crowded around, and I was introduced to Mrs. Amelia Eletto, a spry little woman who boasted that she had been in the opening night line for forty consecutive years.

Last year, Mr. Bing, feeling sympathy for this watch of the faithful, sent out for coffee for the entire line. Human nature being what it is, they expected it this year too. In time, it arrived.

INSIDE the house, except for an executive meeting closeted upstairs, the hum was perceptibly lessening. Irene Barry at the switchboard and Winifred Short at the reception window found a welcome hiatus in the day's bustle. All along the corridors near the stage entrance, ukases about smoking, a warning about the epidemic of flu and colds, new copies of the house rules, and similar adjurations and exhortations were posted, bearing the flowing and distinctive signature of the general manager. Wooden standards, gold-stained, in neat array along the corridor, awaited the supers' hands. Shouts from the stage quickly died, as George Crispano, assistant property man, decided to let the stage crew go for a rest. The little stage office of Ralph Edson, master of properties, on the Fortieth Street side was bright and still, crammed as always with

odds and ends that only he can explain. On the stage, the first set, the tall, buff walls of the hall in the palace at Memphis, stood shadowed in the half-light, occupying only a small part of the floor space. Behind it was an orderly profusion of walls and structures destined to become parts of the temple of Phtha. In the women's dressing rooms, someone practised a troublesome passage behind a closed door. The doormen waited patiently, commenting philosophically that the Fortieth Street breezes are more formidable and virus-bearing than any others around the draughty old house.

Up one flight of stairs there was a single core of activity. Horace Armistead, technical director, of the administrative staff, was exercising his inalienable British right to a "cuppa," although he had lowered standards enough to use tea-balls. With him, sipping and chattering, were his secretary, Helen Meyers; Helene Pons, in whose studios the costumes are made; and Jennie Cervini, the opera-house wardrobe mistress for many years. The last stitch had been taken, so there was nothing to do but hope for the best. Miss Pons expressed the fervent hope that all the supers would show up—the \$2 a head paid for supers' services is sometimes topped by other shows or disregarded in favor of other pursuits. Jennie disappeared, to return with two red veils as possible choices for Zinka Milanov in the Nile Scene. One was brash, turkey red, the other a more subtle color, further toned down by a fine, figured print in webby black lines. Everyone preferred the second. It was decided to defer to Miss Milanov's taste. It turned out that she agreed. I commented on the unusual number of costumes the Ethiopian slave girl wears in this production—four in all, one for each act. Many sopranos content themselves with one. Miss Milanov wanted them especially, I was told.

The conversation became desultory. Everyone felt himself to be at the center of the hurricane, where all is apprehensively still, with the big blow yet to come. We agreed that what would be, would be, and I took my leave with the conventional operatic good wishes—predicting the fracture of several limbs and the prospect of being eaten by a wolf, the German and Italian ways of warding off operatic bad luck.

DURING the long evening, Sherry's buffet and bar were the attraction for hundreds. The larger of the two rooms is now given over entirely to tables, and the bar has been moved into the small room adjoining it. The walls of the large room have been re-covered in a red paper, designed by James Reynolds, that resembles cut velvet, and against this background are ten new sconces, designed by Edward Krumpke and installed by the Metropolitan's chief electrician, Jacob Buchter. With cornices repainted in gold and red, the effect is dazzling, a glowing crimson background for the parade of fashion. Diane Tate and Marian Hall are responsible for the décor. Several hundred patrons enjoyed a pre-opera dinner in this magnificent setting, for kitchens have now been installed.

The crush at intermission time was as powerful as ever, but it seemed to me more mannerly. The elegance of the surroundings discouraged bumpiness. Although photographers had no compunction about dropping used flash bulbs everywhere, theirs was the main disorder until late in the evening, when the place understandably took on a bedraggled air. Autograph hunters were indefatigable in pursuit of Marian Anderson, Jarmila Novotna, Gladys Swarthout, Alfred Lunt and Lynn Fontanne (Mr. Lunt is stage director of the forthcoming *Così fan Tutte* production), Vincent Sheean, Elsa Maxwell, Sol Hurok, and various socialites.

Staff members drifted in to be



Sedge Le Blang

The gala audience—and the largest in its history—that filled the opera house at the opening of the Metropolitan Opera Company's 67th season

greeted by friends. Even Sedge Le Blang, the busy staff photographer, spared a moment in his busy rounds to say hello. Edward Hauch, the master mechanic, told me of his delight in receiving a congratulatory telegram from the stage crew in Cleveland, and confirmed my surmise that the lofty new *Aida* sets are difficult to hoist into place. It seems they have to be erected part way by pushing with a pole, then gingerly be brought upright by tackle. Mr. Armistead and Miss Webster settled an argument I had had with a friend—not in my favor. The huge idol that turns its back to the audience in the temple scene seemed to my friend to be appreciably lower than at dress rehearsal. I thought it was merely a matter of viewing it from the dress circle instead of from the orchestra. It had in fact been cut down—by two feet. And, Mr. Hauch told me later, a new and more sharply defined head had been placed on it, to clarify the silhouette. I asked Miss Webster and Mr. Armistead if the idol was represented from the front, to lend illusion to the dancing girls and priests who must adore it.

"Goodness, no!" exclaimed Miss Webster. "Not only is it not painted, but it is propped up by stage carpentry and set all about with light batteries. No illusion at all!"

Mr. Tonry informed me proudly that his second son is slated to take over the post of the child in Gianni Schicchi, vacated because of increasing age by his brother Reggie, Jr. Eugene is nine, which makes him just right for the part.

Backstage in one intermission, Janet Collins, the comely new Negro première danseuse, went through some acrobatic motions in front of the 39th Street corridor mirror for a magazine photographer, while supers and ballet members looked on in absorption. H. Wendell Endicott, board member from Boston, touring the men's dressing rooms with John Gutman, Mr. Bing's assistant, paused a moment to watch, then joined the fleeting Miss Webster and went back into the house.

Not a seat remained unoccupied for long, on this gala night, even the chairs at the back of the boxes, which have been slightly lengthened in limb to permit better vision. But it is certain that no one was more comfortable than three subscribers in Row Z in the center aisle. They sat in swivel arm-chairs of newer design and lighter upholstery than that of all others in the house. Installed two years ago as an experiment in saving space and increasing comfort, these three seats have gone practically unnoticed, except by the lucky ones who occupy them. Failing a new opera house, is this a means of at-

taining the increase in seating capacity hinted at by Lowell Wadmond, new president of the board, in an article in a recent issue of *Opera News*?

The one portentous note of the season was sounded by Mr. Bing:

"*Aida* was commissioned for the opening of the Suez Canal," he remarked. "Let us hope that our *Aida* will not mark its closing."

## New Aida

(Continued from page 3)

handsome sight. The only trouble with it is that it does not relate successfully to the required action. The king sits enthroned at the top of a high Turandot-like staircase, where he cannot participate in the action and dialogue specified for him except by remote control. In order to give the scene a proper focus it would be necessary for all the principals to continually turn their backs to the audience in order to address the king.

Miss Webster's solution of this impossible design is typical, it seems to me, of the casual way in which she is willing to sacrifice sense for visual effect at a great many points in the opera. When Radames proposes to the King that all the Ethiopian prisoners be freed, Ramfis—who until now has been standing by the throne, at the king's left hand—descends the triumphal staircase, moves to center stage, faces the audience, and pleads, "Ascolta, o Re," with his back turned on the monarch he is addressing. This circumstance is not as unexpected as it might be, for earlier in the act Amonasro has already sung "Ma tu, Re" to the audience. Throughout the scene most of the dialogue was hurled directly at Mr. Cleve—an arrangement that must have been convenient for him as conductor, but did not give the faintest indication of the tensions and cross-currents of emotion the text is intended to reveal. If the performance had been given in English, I dare say the audience would have laughed aloud at such monstrous disregard of the simple amenities of conversation. (Let nobody suppose that the use of foreign languages does not cover a host of ineptitudes and absurdities at the Metropolitan, even in the productions that are considered to be well staged.)

IF Miss Webster had been endeavoring to conceal the visual malapropism of the Triumphal Scene setting by using distracting devices, one might at least praise her canniness—without understanding, however, just how such a design could possibly have been settled upon after the months of preliminary consultation the designer and

(Continued on page 24)



# New Metropolitan Rigoletto

## Has Second-Night Premiere

By JAMES HINTON, JR.

THE second performance of the new opera season, on Nov. 15, brought the first public showing of the new Metropolitan production of Verdi's *Rigoletto*—the first entirely fresh consideration the work has had at the Metropolitan since the 1915-16 season. The real occasion had come earlier in the week, for after a working dress rehearsal before a small invited audience the professional grapevine had spread the word that the new investiture (of the first three acts, at least) was a virtually unqualified success and one of the small handful of undebatably good operatic stagings seen in New York for many years.

Rudolf Bing, embarking on his second season as general manager of the company, could well be proud of having assembled the forces that revived so strong a repertoire piece. The new Don Carlo last season was a fine production too, but since it has never been a continuing public success the rewards were fated to be largely those of prestige. *Rigoletto*, on the other hand, is a staple. Although never as sure a drawing card as *Il Trovatore* and *La Traviata*, it can succeed nobly with the public if well done, and it is in some ways of greater musical interest than its 1851-53 running-mates.

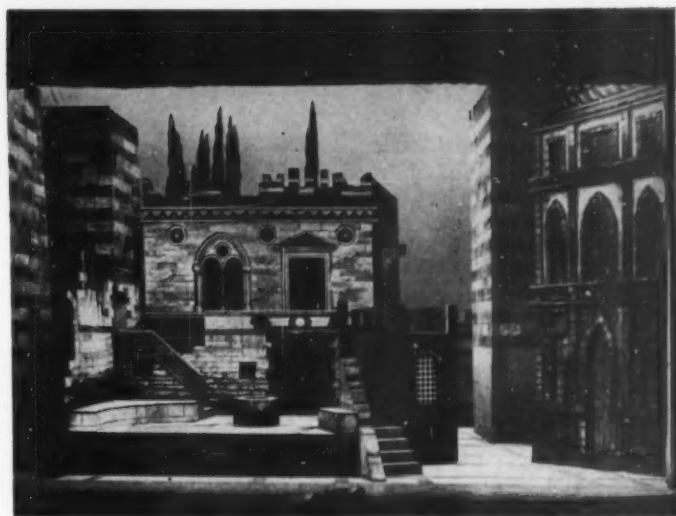
Leonard Warren's *Rigoletto*, it is true, is admired by all who know it, and has become the yardstick against which other *Rigolettos* in this country must be measured. Mr. Warren was extremely effective in the old production which, although it had become terribly shabby, was far from being the worst at the Metropolitan; the new one would have had to be pretty bad to obscure his merits. But the new *Rigoletto* is far more than a vehicle; it is a complete and distinguished job of opera production, independent of the achievements of individual singers.

Many of the elements were entirely unfamiliar, at least to New York. Herbert Graf, although for fifteen years a mainstay of the Metropolitan's staff of stage directors, had never presented his ideas about *Rigo-*

letto here, much less with the advantage of new settings and costumes. Eugene Berman supplied these. Alberto Erede conducted the opera for the first time at the Metropolitan, and the cast included four Metropolitan debutants—Hilde Gueden, soprano of the Vienna Staatsoper, as Gilda; Alois Pernerstorfer, bass of the same company, as Sparafucile; Norman Scott, who has sung extensively in bass roles with the New York City Opera, as Monterone; and Algerd Brazis, Chicago baritone, as the Usher. Richard Tucker was the Duke and Jean Madeira the Maddalena. Thelma Votipka, as Giovanna; Clifford Harvout, as Marullo; Paul Franke, as Borsa; Lawrence Davidson, as the Count Ceprano; Anne Bollinger, as the Countess Ceprano; and Margaret Roggero, as the Page, rounded out the list of singers. The choreography in the first act was by Zachary Solov, new to the company this season.

THE settings and stage direction of the first three acts were eminently satisfying. It had been said in advance that the opera would be treated in an interpretation of early-Renaissance style (as opposed to the pseudo late-Renaissance treatments of customary *Rigoletto* productions) but few were prepared for the brilliant stylized naturalism and superb painting that were revealed when the first-act curtains drew swiftly into the wings. The audience was transported into the world of Bellini, of Giorgione, of Carpaccio. The spacious room, its upstage wall pierced in the center with an arched doorway, was filled with ladies and gentlemen in fifteenth-century dress. The men's cylindrical red hats and wide, beret-like caps furnished splashes of color as they moved naturally about the court. Youths and girls danced and conducted their flirtations to the playing of whiteclad musicians in the windows of an arcade above, while the Duke's jester capered in and out among them.

It was more than a beautiful stage picture; it set the mood of hectic gaiety that must contrast so strongly with the solemn curse that leads to tragedy. There were details with which it would be possible to disagree—notably *Rigoletto's* presence



Photographs by Sedge Le Blang

The setting for Act II of the Metropolitan Opera's new production of *Rigoletto*, showing the jester's house. Eugene Berman was the designer

before his entrance is indicated in the music and the center-staging of *Questo o quella*—but the movement was so carefully timed and carried through on its own terms that it would be the sheerest ingratitude to quibble. It was a magnificently executed piece of stagecraft on the part of Mr. Graf and Mr. Berman.

The next set was equally good—one of the best aids any one has given to solution of the various knotty problems that confront anyone staging the second act of *Rigoletto*. Mr. Berman provided a finely conceived and painted set that contributed to the mood and also gave Mr. Graf every opportunity to achieve naturalness and believability in the action. By the use of levels, without obviously platforming to get them, Mr. Berman produced a wonderfully workable set that was also scenic art of the first order. Here, as in the first act, Mr. Graf's staging was first-rate in conception and in detail. Everything flowed naturally, with full regard for the musical implications, and the shifting patterns of figures always provided full opportunity for the singers to make their effects without strain or lack of seeming spontaneity. What more could one ask for an operatic stage director?

The setting for the third act was almost, but not quite, as satisfying as the preceding two. The vaulted hall that served as the ducal antechamber was acceptably painted, in perspective that led the eye toward the stage-right door to Gilda's place of concealment. A large fireplace at stage left balanced the room handsomely. Both it and the bust over the bedchamber

doorway were satisfyingly real looking. Unfortunately, as much could not be said for the painted, scalloped drop that framed the inner proscenium. It was, exceptionally, quite distractingly a piece of scenery, and both it and the arched back-wall of the set met the rest of the room at improbable and disturbing angles.

Nonetheless, the third-act set provided a basically well-considered arena for the action and permitted Mr. Graf to arrange his actors in groupings as dramatically sensible as before. The New Yorker must go back a good many years who can remember a more exciting and theatrically valid direction of Cortigiani.

There is, however, one detail in the set that will remain a puzzle until either it is changed or the sets wear out. Why (and an expletive could be added) do four of the five upstage doorways have gabled lintels and the fifth, otherwise their duplicate, a rounded one? I would dearly love to be instructed.

In sum, the first three acts of this new *Rigoletto* production, with a few picayune exceptions, were the triumphant result of exacting labor with their best powers by an operatic stage director of first-class musicality and technical competence and a first-class, thoroughly professional and experienced stage designer. The fourth act, therefore, was something of an unpleasant surprise.

WHAT Americans are accustomed to malign as 1928 German expressionism came as a rude shock

(Continued on page 25)



The court festivities in Act I, with Richard Tucker (the Duke) at center stage and Leonard Warren (*Rigoletto*) watching from the throne steps



Taking part in the famous quartet in Act IV of Verdi's opera are Mr. Warren, Hilde Gueden (*Gilda*), Jean Madeira (*Maddalena*), and Mr. Tucker

# Ballets des Champs Elysees Presents Three New Works

By A. V. COTON

THE Ballets des Champs-Elysées, after a London engagement in August and September, gave a four-week season in Paris in October, presenting three new works, all of them by non-French choreographers—*Revanche*, by Ruth Page; *Romanza Romana*, by Frank Staff; and *La Damnée*, by Walter Gore. The addition of these works to the repertory brought to nineteen the total of new ballets created since Roland Petit left the company in 1948.

The largest breakaway ballet enterprise ever formed in France, the Ballet des Champs-Elysées was created in 1945 by directors, choreographers, and technicians interested in showing that contemporary French ballet could still mean something. Their revolt was aimed largely at the sterility resulting from five years of German occupation, and in part, also, at the tradition-bound conditions existing in the Paris Opéra Ballet.

It is an oddity of European art that the founding of an academy—which should act as a live center of information, teaching, research and inspiration—almost inevitably leads to conditions that cause the more progressive artists bred by that academy to initiate a breakaway movement. Perhaps we have not yet discovered how to make an academy achieve complete efficiency in all its departments. In any event, the tendency to break away has marked the history of every organized ballet group since ballet was revived early in this century by the most iconoclastic movement we have seen. It was a healthy reaction against academic sterility that led Serge Diaghilev and his colleagues to found the Ballets Russes, the company that put ballet back into circulation as a live art over forty years ago. Possibly the formation of the Ballets des Champs-Elysées will one day seem to have exerted a comparable influence in restoring the health of the art of theater dance in France in our own time.

A further complication in the history of ballet companies is the process of the breakaway from breakaway movements. Sooner or later one of the pioneers disagrees with the others and splits off, usually to form a rival, and supposedly stronger, group—which never, in my experience, has lasted as

long or proved to be as much alive artistically as the parent group. Both forms of revolt, against artistic sterility and against too much discipline, are instances of what historians sometimes call "the response to challenge." Unfortunately, ballet breeds a highly introverted type of revolutionary who all too often suffers from the sickness which the French call *folie de grandeur*, which is, freely translated, an excessive idea of one's own artistic importance.

THE Ballets des Champs-Elysées, the most vital company in the European scene in its first three years of existence, presented ten ballets by Roland Petit and four by other choreographers up to the spring of 1948. Mr. Petit then formed the Ballets de Paris de Roland Petit, which gave eleven ballets, six of which were by Petit. During its existence the Ballets de Paris carried for a while the artistic *panache* that had distinguished the original company from 1945 to 1947. The Petit company disbanded in Hollywood this summer, however, and Mr. Petit is waiting there to choreograph a Danny Kaye and Moira Shearer motion picture. Meanwhile, the Ballets des Champs-Elysées, after many ups and downs and an almost total change of control and personnel, has again begun to impress itself upon the European scene. In its six years it has created 33 ballets, and its successive directors have been firm enough to scrap a high proportion of them.

Boris Kochno, who originally held the post, is again in charge as artistic director. The members of the company are mainly French, with a healthy intermixture of English and American dancers. Among recent recruits are Leon Danielian, formerly of the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo; and Paula Hinton, Walter Gore, and Frank Staff—all alumni of the Ballet Rambert.

Ruth Page's *Revanche* uses the story of *Il Trovatore*, balletized in a prologue and four scenes lasting fifty minutes. It employs part of Verdi's score for the opera, and is set in eye-filling décors by Antoni Clavé, who designed Petit's *Carmen*, *Caprichos*, and *Ballabile* (for the Sadler's Wells Ballet). The choreography, based on the classical technique, is more dramatic than aesthetic in content, and lets the principal characters act and dance one another practically off the stage. The need to clarify the complex story leads to passages of not very inspired dancing at certain points; and the efficient carpentering of the sections of the Verdi score, while helpful to the dramatic effect, does not give the choreography of the work an organic, inevitable shape. The ballet won great acclaim from many Parisian critics—largely, one suspects, because of its "safe" music and quite stunning décor. As a ballet to a scenario based on a generally known plot, *Revanche* seemed to me in the same class as such earlier Page ballets as *Frankie* and *Johnny and Billy Sunday*, and of no better quality. Some of the critics who had attacked Miss Page's ballets eighteen months ago, when Les Ballets Américains appeared at the Théâtre des Champs-Elysées, now sought to explain their change of front. That rubber yardstick of French dance criticism, "*le bon goût*," was used with



Fred Brommet

Sonia Arova as Azucena and Vladimir Skouratoff as Manrico in the Gypsy Camp scene in Ruth Page's *Revanche*, a ballet version of *Il Trovatore*

great effect. "*Le bon goût*" is an abstract notion which can be made to work both ways: If a critic does not like what he sees, he calls it an offense against "*le bon goût*"; if he approves what is offered, he holds that it conforms to the never-explained requirements.

THE other new ballets are by Staff and Gore, choreographers who for years have been turning out good, and occasionally excellent, ballets. Both have too often worked to music or décor (or both) not completely geared to the theme or atmosphere of the ballets; frequently they have worked without the advantage of the supervision of an experienced, ruthless artistic adviser. If Mr. Kochno can still give choreographers the sort of instinctive guidance he has so often in the past, both Staff and Gore can make their mark as outstanding creators. Staff's *métier* is the lyrical situation, the light comment on human oddity and absurdity; Gore is primarily concerned with the sadness of youth and the unhappiness of the world's unfortunates. Each of the new works is on a typical theme, each is largely successful, and each has structural weaknesses.

Staff's *Romanza Romana* is set in modern Rome. A young girl, being shown the sights by an aged uncle, meets and becomes enamored of a handsome Italian working youth. The pair shake off the uncle and manage to keep separated from him, leaving him with the consolations of his Baedeker. The slight episode is pulled out to its utmost, yet without any sense of straining or thinness. The main triangle of characters is offset, underlined, and commented upon by a diversity of types—wandering students, flower-sellers, street boys, musicians, nuns, and priests. The setting by Guillaume Gillet is too naturalistic, and its unimaginative lighting gives none of the sense of being "out of this world" that the choreography requires. The score, by Pierre Petit, a one-time Prix de Rome winner and the composer of Serge Lifar's *Zadig*, which was produced three years ago, accorded well enough with the spirit of the ballet. While it was not particularly melodious, it was rhythmically suited to the movement; unpretentious and unmemorable, it supported rather than paralleled the dancing. The girl and boy roles were given to Danielle Darnance and Vladimir Skouratoff, who invested them with proper gaiety and tenderness.

Gore's *La Damnée* treats a first-rate theatrical theme. Set in a vague mediaeval time and place, it unfolds the story of a woman falsely accused of sorcery. Pursued by an angry mob, she is sheltered by a priest. She accidentally causes his death, and gives the mob a valid excuse for murdering her.

Her summary trial and lynching provide the climax of the work. The first phase of the story is accompanied by a percussion prelude by Michael Hobson. The rest of the story lays its movement patterns uneasily on the framework of Samuel Barber's First Symphony. The single set is effective, but the costumes are rather arid because of their poverty of design and monochromatic coloring. The idea of flight and pursuit is well worked out inside the single set (with variations in the timing and placing of the entrances and exits for single figures and for the mob). As the victim, Paula Hinton gave a stupendous performance.

BOTH the Staff and Gore works were partial successes. Staff's suffered from its dull set and costumes, and a lack of finesse in the acting and dancing of certain secondary parts. Gore's was marred by the restrictions imposed on the movement patterns by the score, which forced or slowed down the choreography at various points. Both ballets appeared to have been assembled too quickly, for they need a good deal of revision and rearrangement. Mr. Kochno's function for over thirty years, with the several organizations he has served, has been to suggest themes and treatments, and to bring together choreographers, designers, and composers capable of digesting these themes and creating good works upon them. This process has not yet begun with the reconstituted Ballets des Champs-Elysées, as far as the first crop of new ballets indicates.

With its record of experiment and success behind it, however, this company is the most interesting group among the wandering ballet companies (Continued on page 17)



Miss Page (left) and Miss Arova both posing as Azucena in *Revanche*



International

Miss Arova and Mr. Skouratoff in another scene from *Revanche*





Dorothy Dow as she appeared in a stage performance of *Erwartung*, in Zurich

Sarda

By ROBERT SABIN

ON Nov. 15, New York heard two operas of supreme dramatic intensity. The Metropolitan Opera gave the first performance of its new production of Verdi's *Rigoletto*, while Dorothy Dow and the New York Philharmonic-Symphony under Dimitri Mitropoulos gave the first American performance of Arnold Schönberg's monodrama, *Erwartung*, in concert form, in Carnegie Hall, in memory of the composer. Mr. Mitropoulos preceded *Erwartung* with Schönberg's arrangements of two of Bach's organ choral-preludes, *Schmücke dich, O liebe Seele*; and Komm, Gott, Schöpfer, heiliger Geist; Brahms's Symphony No. 4 made up the second half. The same works were played on Nov. 16 and 18.

At the first glance, nothing could seem more antithetical than Verdi's melodramatic, brilliant, savagely energetic opera, and Schönberg's expressionistic revelation of the world of shadows, the exposition of a half-crazed woman's mind in her moments of supreme stress. Yet, in actual performance, Schönberg's music is as gripping, as realistically intense, as dramatic in its way as Verdi's.

*Rigoletto* works from the outside in; we see the outburst of *Rigoletto*'s anguish and the repercussion of his vengeance, and leave him prostrated by the grim irony of fate. The events of the plot keep us tensed. *Erwartung* works from the inside out; gradually, as the woman, who is the only character on the stage, stumbles through the forest, we learn of her lover and of the other woman who came between them. Like Jocasta in Martha Graham's *Night Journey* (another expressionistic masterpiece), the woman seems to relive in one moment her whole tragedy. We catch a terrifying glimpse into her soul at the point when, like a drowning man, she re-enacts her life in a flash. But the music of *Erwartung* is so packed with color and dramatic suggestiveness that even when the opera is given in concert form the listener is swept away into the eerie world of her consciousness. The most important thing about *Erwartung* is that it is living theatre and not an esoteric work to be taken off the library shelf and studied by musicologists and historians.

THE performance of Schönberg's music was phenomenal from every point of view. Dorothy Dow, a so-

prano born in Texas, had been heard in New York in the role of Susan B. Anthony, in Virgil Thomson's opera, *The Mother of Us All*, when that work had four performances on May 12-15, 1947, at Columbia University's third annual Festival of Contemporary Music. She sang the role of Susan with a musical authority and radiance of personality (especially in the apotheosis) that bore rich promise.

On Oct. 31, 1949, Miss Dow sang the role of the woman in *Erwartung* in the Swiss premiere of the opera, in Zurich. Her considerable experience with the role in stage form explains her dramatic security; but only an extraordinary musical gift could explain her ability to sing the pitches, deliver the German text with absolute clarity, and phrase the vocal line so that it is as dramatically significant as it is functionally clear.

A singer who was able to learn roles only by note and familiar melodic and harmonic association would probably commit suicide if confronted with the necessity of mastering the vocal part of *Erwartung*. The demands are unexpected and mercilessly difficult. The wide leaps, sometimes of almost two octaves, the alternations of fortissimo and pianissimo within the space of three or four bars, the unusual intervals and absence of familiar harmonic patterns, the countless technical and emotional subtleties of the part require a musician of exceptional power. Miss Dow was more than technically accurate (in itself a prodigious feat); she understood most of the implications of the music. Her high tones, well supported, rang out over the orchestral sonorities; and the lower voice had a variety of color that revealed an intelligent approach to the problems of vocal production. Miss Dow's voice did not seem to be one of extraordinary natural beauty, but her use of it and her artistry were very satisfying.

At this late date, it is unnecessary to hymn the praises of Dimitri Mitropoulos as an interpreter of contemporary music, especially of the fiendishly exacting scores of Schönberg, Webern, Berg, and the other Viennese masters and their followers. But it is pertinent to say that his mastery of these scores is one of the notable intellectual feats of our times. For he has steeped himself in the idioms of this music so deeply that they have become his natural speech. The most unusual harmonic combinations, the most complex rhythmical schemes,

the most abstruse devices of counterpoint cause him no uneasiness.

**ERWARTUNG** is a transitional work, preceding those in which Schönberg had fully evolved the twelve-tone idiom. But it is far bolder than Wagnerian chromaticism, to say nothing of the diatonic style of the nineteenth-century classicists. To master it, a musician brought up in traditional paths has to acquire a new language. Another challenge is the problem of rhythm. Quantitative rather than accentual rhythm is the key to the pulse of this music. The intricate patterns must have time to evolve, yet the musical mass must be kept in motion. Conducting this music is like delivering an enormously complex and subtle text, in which subordinate clauses and phrases cannot be glossed over or quickly tossed off. The Philharmonic-Symphony players, versatile as they are, could not have mastered this score in a few rehearsals without a leader who had it all in his head and heart.

Much has been written and argued about the technical aspects of *Erwartung*, its free use of the twelve tones of the chromatic scale, abjuring the diatonic system, its continuous thematic invention, its virtuosic handling of a huge orchestra to obtain the most exquisite effects as well as Straussian masses of sonority. The work is indeed revolutionary, and it broke the path for Berg's *Wozzeck* and the other dramatic masterpieces of the Viennese school. It seems hard to believe that *Erwartung* was conceived as long ago as 1909. Yet the important fact is that the listener is not conscious of the intellectual or obtrusive facets of the score if he really hears the music.

A distinguished young American composer said to me at the final rehearsal: "It is amazing how old-fashioned this music sounds. It is so dated." I cannot agree with him. The idiom, it is true, is totally unlike the objective, stream-lined neoclassicism that is fashionable at the moment—or was until very recently. In the 42 years since the composition of *Erwartung*, trends in music, psychology, and theatre have undergone Protean changes. But the dramatic truth of *Erwartung* (and I believe that it is an expression of great dramatic truth) is as fresh and compelling as that of Don Giovanni, Otello, or Tristan und Isolde. The crux of the question is whether one finds Schönberg a true genius or whether one finds him merely an intellectual virtuoso. Those who are not moved over *Erwartung*, those who merely puzzle their brains over it, should seek other musical pastures. They will find little here. But there are many (and the unmistakable enthusiasm of the audience at the premiere proved it) who are stirred by this music and who sense its enormous vision and expressive command.

*Erwartung* is not as functionally perfect, as flawless as *Pierrot Lunaire*. It is obviously an experimental and sometimes a rather heavy-handed work. But it never loses the thread of dramatic development. Schönberg gave the idea of the libretto to Marie Pappenheim, who wrote a text that is full of beautiful evocations of nature and vivid touches that sharpen the sense of the woman's hysterical condition. The very first lines plunge us into the core of the tragedy. The

woman approaches a tall, dark wood in the moonlight. She asks herself: "Shall I enter here? I cannot see the path. How silver the tree trunks shimmer—like birches! Oh, our garden. The flowers for him surely must have withered. The night is so warm. I am afraid."

At once we sense that something terrible has happened or is about to happen. The woman is in a sense both an Isolde and a Salome. She searches for her lover, yet when she finds his body, she has long since realized his fate subconsciously. We ask ourselves, did she murder him or did she merely wish his death? We shall never know what torturing thoughts she had during the three days that he did not come to her. At bar 325 in the score comes a terrifying outburst: "You are looking over there again? Where is she, then, the witch, the strumpet, the woman with the white arms. Oh, you love them, those white arms that you kiss until they flush red. Oh, you, you, you, you wretch, you liar. Look how you evade by glance! Are you bowed in shame? You embraced her (didn't you?) so tenderly and eagerly, and I waited. Where did she flee when you lay in this pool of blood? I want to drag her here by her white arms."

Nothing that Miss Dow accomplished was more telling than her treatment of the phrases that follow this outburst: "So, no place for me there. Oh! not even the consolation of being able to die with you. How terribly I loved you." On the stage, in the dusk, the vision of the woman caressing the dead body of her lover would make this music twice as gripping. But Miss Dow managed to convey the sense of spent anguish and transfiguration, even within the stylistic limits of a concert performance. This is not to say that she exhausted the possibilities of the role; for it would require one of the greatest singing actresses of the world to do that; but she showed an intelligence and insight that made one eager to see what she could do with the music in its stage form.

Perhaps the supreme page of *Erwartung* is the last one, with its tantalizing uncertainty: "Oh, are you there? I was seeking you." As the chromatic major thirds shimmer out into silence, one is startlingly reminded of Berg's opera *Wozzeck* (begun five years later). There is the same mystery, the same ability to express a lack of comfortable finality that is one of the characteristics of modern art and modern thought, as opposed to traditional concepts. In the Liebestod Wagner burst the bonds of dramatic realism and conventional psychology. *Erwartung*, too, penetrates into the world of the subconscious and of mystical vision, the world that may be more real than what we call reality.

In view of the magnificent interpretation of the Schönberg opera, it seems beside the point to expatiate on the flaws of Mr. Mitropoulos' conducting of the Brahms's Symphony. He put every sincere lover of modern music in his debt for no one could fail to get something from this performance whether he felt a natural affinity for the music or not. Schönberg's widow was a guest of honor at the performance. She must have felt a consoling sense of triumph as the audience cheered the performers repeatedly at the end of the opera.

## Chilean Festivals

### Introduce New Works

By FEDOR KABALIN

MUSIC, like cheese and wine, is the more appreciated the older it is. This provides little cause for joy among those who create music today, or to those who recreate it. The level of musical culture is established to a larger degree by the vitality of creative activity. For this reason, musicians of high artistic standing and musical institutions guided by the best aims are eager to show their artistry not only by masterful performances of accepted classics, but also by interpreting the works created in our own day. They are not moved merely by the desire to encourage young talent. Participation in the forward movement of the musical art is a vital necessity for performers, and for musical culture as a whole.

After many different approaches had been tried in Chile in an effort to overcome the traditional reluctance of the average audience to expose itself to new music, an original way was found with the establishment, in 1947, of biennial festivals of Chilean music. The programs of these festivals represent more the ingenious combination of familiar methods than the invention of new ones. The festivals are actually composers' contests with cash prize awards. But the performance of the works entered in the contest is an integral part of the festival itself, and all the competing works are performed in the course of it. Moreover, the merits of entries are gauged not by a small jury—whose professional reputation and moral integrity may be held in generally high esteem, but whose verdicts may none the less be arbitrary—but by the public itself.

This plan was organized and developed by the Institute of Musical Extension, which prepares the musical materials for the performances and furnishes the performing artists and groups. A selection commission determines which works are to be accepted for performance, admitting all compositions that meet minimum requirements of technical skill and musical seriousness.

THE contest works are divided into two main groups—symphonic music and chamber music. The latter designation includes everything that does not fit into the "symphonic" category. The festival audience, which registers in advance, is divided into the following categories: 1, Composers, conductors, and music teachers on the university level; 2, professional musicians active in the field of serious (as opposed to "popular") music, music critics, composition students in the National Conservatory, and some qualified musical amateurs; 3, all who do not belong in either of the first two categories. This classification is an acknowledgement of the fact that skilled judgment of musical works requires special preparation, and that those better prepared for the task should therefore have a larger share in shaping the final verdict.

There are two different stages of the festival. First come elimination concerts in each of the two groups—symphonic and chamber music—in which the audience grades the pieces on a scale ranging from 0 to 10. The grades given by each of the three categories of voters are calculated

separately. The ballot is secret, but the voting forms of the various categories are printed in different colors. When the average grade in each voters' category is found, the general average for each work is figured, using a coefficient of 0.5 for the first category, 0.3 for the second and 0.2 for the third. The works graded above 5.5 then enter the final competition, which takes the form of "prize concerts" (again held separately for symphonic and chamber compositions) at which the awards are made by the same method. Works that pass the 7.5 mark in the second grading are entitled to a first prize and those above 6.5 to a second. In case no work meets the requirement, no prize is awarded. The winner of the highest score also receives an honor scroll as a token of his distinction.

The first honor scroll, an award not devised until after the initial festival in 1948, was awarded in the second festival, held in December, 1950, at Santiago de Chile, to Domingo Santa Cruz, for his *Egloga*, a work for solo soprano, mixed chorus, and orchestra. Mr. Santa Cruz had already distinguished himself in the 1948 festival with a *Symphony for Strings*, very youthful in spirit and fresh in inspiration, and written in a joyous vein; and with his masterful *String Quartet No. 2*, which won a first prize on that occasion. By a curious coincidence, his entries in the first festival were pieces composed exclusively for string ensembles, while the works he submitted on the second occasion were written exclusively for chorus. Among these last were a series of Christmas carols, *Cantares de Pascua*, for chorus of equal voices, written for performance by school groups, and the more exigent *Spring Songs*, a set of six a cappella choruses, which showed Santa Cruz at his best, searching, as always, for new modes of harmonic and contrapuntal treatment. *Spring Songs*

attained spiritual serenity and complete technical mastery.

SECOND prizes in the symphonic group were won by two composers of the younger generation—Juan Orrego Salas, 32, and René Amengual, 40. Both prize winning works were concertos for solo instruments, Orrego's for piano and Amengual's for harp.

Orrego is probably the most brilliantly talented of the younger Chilean composers. A former Rockefeller and Guggenheim fellow and Tanglewood alumnus, he has occupied since his return from the United States various positions of responsibility in Chilean musical life, notably as professor at the National Conservatory and editor of an excellent quarterly, *Revista Musical Chilena*. He composes constantly. A one-act opera written at the same time as the *Piano Concerto* still awaits performance. His *First Symphony* was given its premiere last season, with great success. The earlier *Christmas Cantata*, for solo soprano, was performed first by Howard Hanson in Rochester, N. Y., and later in Chile and in Europe by Fritz Busch and Paul Paray. The *Canciones Castellanas*, for soprano and eight instruments, was included in the program of the 1948 ISCM Festival in Palermo, and has been published by Chester.

Orrego's style is natural, spontaneous, and fluent, very rich in ideas, completely tonal and consciously melodious in the noblest sense of both of the terms, yet authentically modern. He has an unconcealed fondness for the old polyphonic masters and for the forms of baroque music. His diatonically conceived and polyphonically realized part-writing is a modern replica of the technique of those composers who, in the epoch before a feeling for tonality was established, brought into being by the interrelationship of the parts alone chords only very distantly related in tonal harmony. Orrego's *Piano Concerto* has a brilliant and gratifying solo part set against a colorful, symphonic orchestral part. It is written in the traditional scheme of three movements, which in this work follow one another without interruption. Orrego pays his tribute to polyphony, even in so typical a virtuosic piece as this, by introducing a fugue in the sparkling *Rondo*.

For Amengual, composing is more a part-time activity than it is with Orrego; most of his energies are spent in education. Besides holding



Juan Orrego Salas

written in the usual sonata form. In the second movement he reaches extraordinary depths of expression and achieves great musical beauties; these are perhaps his best pages to date. The last movement, however, is damaged on the one hand by a recurrent tendency to introduce jazz elements and on the other by his evident desire to offer a lighter fare to soloists and listeners. This section is out of step with the first two movements, and tends to spoil the impression left by them. Amengual's *String Quartet No. 2* was also presented. It proved to be a work of merit, although it is too homophonic for an *a priori* polyphonic ensemble. His *Ten Preludes* for piano show good craftsmanship and an intimate knowledge of the instrument.

NO first prizes were awarded in the chamber-music group. The only second prize was won by Gustavo Becerra for his *Three Choral Songs* and *Quodlibet* for three-part mixed chorus, a piece with ingenious writing for the voices, especially in the *Quodlibet*, based on two different Yugoslavian Christmas songs. Another of his works was performed in the festival—a *Cello Sonata*, one of a series of sonatas for various instruments. Becerra has already written sonatas for violin, viola, and solo piano. He is one of the most hopeful talents in the youngest generation of Chilean composers, for he is extremely productive. Other members of Becerra's generation are Carlos Riesco and Alfonso Montecino. All three were born in 1924 or 1925. Riesco was represented in the first festival by a short overture, which was rather experimental and left no definitive impression of his musical personality; he won a great success earlier in the year with the presentation of his *Serenade for Orchestra* during the regular concert season of the Chilean Symphony. While Montecino was touring Europe as a pianist, his powerful *Duo for Violin and Piano*, finished in New York in the summer of 1950, was performed in the second festival, and won acclaim from those who appreciated its musical qualities and were not disturbed by the acid dissonance of its style. An *Overture Concertante* by Montecino was performed in the symphonic group.

Of the composers who won prizes in the first festival, Hans Helfritz was represented in the second festival by the *Divertimento for Orchestra*, light in vein and humorous in character. A more lasting impression was left by his set of three songs, *China Klage*, a musical evocation of deep expressiveness and poetic atmosphere. The work was well sung by Ria Foke, with Free Foke as accompanist. The accompaniments of Mr.

(Continued on page 31)

**Contemporary Chilean music  
is granted a hearing in biennial  
series — really a composition  
contest in which entries  
are judged by the whole audience**

was considered by many to be the most important unaccompanied choral composition presented in this festival.

But there was also unanimous approval of his cantata-like *Egloga*—the approval both of official criticism and of the listening public. *Egloga* is based on a pastoral poem by Lope de Vega. It may be that the composer overstepped the simplicity of his text by employing, especially in the last section of the work, dramatic climaxes inconsistent with its spirit and character. However, Santa Cruz followed his predilection for dramatic expression without falling into sombre moods or indulging in overcomplicated polyphonic and chromatic writing of the sort he sometimes employed in his earlier works. The 52-year-old composer now seems to have

an official position as director of the 102-year-old National Conservatory of Music, he is a noted piano pedagogue and a respectable pianist. His musical language moves between the vocabulary of impressionism and that of expressionism, with touches of neo-classical construction. His creative vein is not easy, but it is always brilliant and often humorous. Several years were spent in the composition of his *Harp Concerto*, an excellent composition, and one that is especially welcome since it employs an instrument with an extremely poor literature. He avoided the danger of falling into the sort of formula-like writing that overdoes glissandos and other worn-out effects, and he was able to overcome the harp's difficulties of modulation. The first movement is



# New York City Ballet

## Opens Second Fall Season

THE New York City Ballet opened its second 1951 fall season at the City Center on Nov. 13. It had already given a three-week block of performances in September, vacating the house when the New York City Opera moved in. The prospectus for the present season, which is to run for five weeks, announced at least four premieres and three revivals. Opening night, however, left such fresh or freshened items as Jerome Robbins' *Tyl Ulenspiegel*; George Balanchine's *Apollo*, *Swan Lake*, *Baiser de la Fee*, and *The Four Temperaments*; and Antony Tudor's *Lilac Garden* to be anticipated. The program included Ruthanna Boris' *Cakewalk*, Todd Bolender's *The Miraculous Mandarin*, and Balanchine's *Pas de Trois* and *Bourrée Fantasque*.

The novelties were those of personnel. Tanaquil LeClerc, who had been out of action with an injured leg earlier in the fall, returned to dance as charmingly as ever in *Bourrée Fantasque*, in which her partner was Mr. Robbins, who returned from six months in Europe in much better fettle than he had been before he left. They both brought renewed life to one of Balanchine's most charming program-closers.

Perhaps the most brilliant performances of the evening, though, were those of Nora Kaye, Maria Tallchief, and André Eglevsky in *Pas de Trois*. On their mettle amid the opening-night excitement, they danced Balanchine's wonderfully idiomatic vehicle with the sort of virtuosic brio that is meat and drink to balletomanes. It was such a performance as could make even the most jaded believe wholeheartedly in the genius of all concerned—Balanchine, the dancers, and even Minkus, whose middle-class but thoroughly danceable score took on the brilliance of the whole.

*Cakewalk*, which lead off in this program instead of taking its accustomed place at the end, has been changed in various respects, and to its advantage. Without losing any of its charm, it now hangs together better and makes a more satisfying climax at the end. Frank Hobi danced his *Sleight-of-Foot* turn better than ever before, with just as glittering execution and considerably more relaxed humor. Jilana and Doris Breckenridge were also good as the Ends.

The *Miraculous Mandarin* suffered somewhat from the fact that Mr. Bolender's personal style is not very well suited to the taut movements of his own title figure, but Melissa Hayden danced with real force as the Woman. Leon Barzin conducted competently throughout, and the orchestra played acceptably for him.

—JAMES HINTON, JR.

### Tyl Ulenspiegel

The second night of the New York City Ballet season brought the first of its novelties, *Tyl Ulenspiegel*, choreographed by George Balanchine to the familiar music of Strauss's *Till Eulenspiegel's Merry Pranks*, and invested with handsome décor and costumes by the Catalan painter Esteban Francés. Jerome Robbins danced the title role, and Leon Barzin conducted the well-prepared if under-sized orchestra.

The ancient spelling adopted by Balanchine for the title of the new work is not an affection. It serves

two purposes—to distinguish this ballet from the one of the same subject presented by Jean Babilée in the current Ballet Theatre season; and to indicate the specifically Flemish character of the rogue-hero. The source of Balanchine's scenario is Charles de Coster's epic novel, written in the nineteenth century on the basis of fifteenth- and sixteenth-century materials (and incidentally, used by Wladimir Vogl in his oratorio *Thyl Claes*). The figure of Tyl, depicted as no more than a willful, harum-scarum prankster in Strauss's tone poem, has a historical significance in De Coster's novel, as he has in Flemish folk legend. He is the symbolic liberator of sixteenth-century Flanders from the harsh control of the Spanish king Philip II and his deputy, the Duke of Alba. The new ballet seeks to maintain the patriotic aspect of the legend at the same time that it gives full reign to the waggeries implied by the score.

The ballet opens with a brief, sinister prologue, accompanied only by a loud drum-roll. At a huge checker-board two children, Tyl and Philip, contend with each other; Tyl makes his moves with a large loaf of bread, while Philip employs several models of galleons of the Spanish armada. The game ends in a physical encounter. The boys disappear behind the checker-board, and the adult Tyl and Philip appear in their places. A black-out occurs. The Strauss score now begins, and the curtain rises on a superbly vigorous and imaginative medieval scene that evokes the eerie, angry fancies of Hieronymus Bosch.

The ballet is really not a ballet but a serio-comic pantomime. In a series of disguises that pass by so swiftly that it is difficult to recall them in detail—as a beggar, a monk, a painter, an old woman—Tyl plays a series of practical jokes—sometimes childish, sometimes lewd, sometimes cruel—on Philip and his retinue. At the climax of the music, which in Strauss's program accompanies the hanging of Tyl, the proceedings take on a wry twist. For a moment Tyl stands as limp as Petrouchka; then, picking up a convenient skeleton from the floor, he tosses it to a couple of hungry animals nearby, who proceed to dismember it and gnaw at the bones while Tyl comes brightly back to life and Philip replaces him as a corpse, to be carried off in state by his retainers. In this somewhat surrealist fashion the character of Tyl as the deathless liberator of his people is equated with the figure of the legendary prankster.

Despite the uncommon profusion of properties, costumes and supernumerary characters, *Tyl Ulenspiegel* is essentially a one-man show. From start to finish Mr. Robbins is on the stage, so continuously in action that everyone else seems a mere stooge. And what a brilliant display of comic mime and dance he gave in the opening performance! Mimicry in the great comic tradition lay at the center of his conception of the role, embellished by constant touches of pure movement as humorous in their own right as the pantomimic elements. The role suited him so perfectly that it was impossible to guess how much of it was devised by Balanchine and how much resulted from the direct play of Mr. Robbins' own instinct.

Just how durable a work *Tyl Ulenspiegel* is remains to be seen, for it rests its case quite as much upon the qualities of its performance as on formal choreographic features. Without Mr. Robbins it might easily prove flat and pointless; but as long as he remains with the company it will be, at the very best, a superlative entertainment.

In addition to the new piece, the second-night program included Todd Bolender's *Mother Goose Suite*, with Janet Reed a serene and poetic figure in the central role of the Young Girl; Balanchine's *Concerto Barocco*, with the strong cast—headed by Maria Tallchief, Diana Adams, and Nicholas Magallanes—that took part in its revival last September; and a dashing account of Balanchine's *Symphony in C*, with the principal duet assignments taken brilliantly by Miss Tallchief and Mr. Magallanes; Tanaquil LeClerc and Francisco Moncion; Miss Reed and André Eglevsky; and Patricia Wilde and Frank Hobi.

—C. S.

### Apollo

George Balanchine's *Apollo*, Leader of the Muses (*Apollon Musagète*) was revived by the New York City Ballet in its Nov. 15 program. His version of the ballet—it was first choreographed by the late Adolph Bolm—dates from 1928, when it was created for the Diaghileff company in Paris. It has been given in this country by the American Ballet, in 1938, and by Ballet Theatre, in 1945.

Considered one of Balanchine's first important works, *Apollo* marked a return at the time of its premiere to a classic ballet style, if a style considerably modified and enlarged by the choreographer. As a consequence, the ballet has historic interest, and its revival seemed eminently worth while, particularly since Balanchine was on hand to duplicate his own creation.

The ballet's intrinsic value is still considerable, and if it seems on the whole a rather pallid work today, it is almost wholly free from gaucheries of experimentation or sophistication gone stale. In its simple picture of Apollo's birth and his relationship with three of the nine Muses—Terpsichore, Polyhymnia, and Calliope—a mood of classical serenity is delicately maintained throughout the work, only mildly disturbed by Polyhymnia's lively variation or the jazz-like syncopations of the *pas de quatre* during the coda. The movement has many fine, characteristic Balanchine touches, such as the intertwining arms and figures, and is often freshly inventive from Apollo's second variation on, through his *pas de deux* with Terpsichore to the apotheosis with all three Muses. Frequent tableaux or poses keep the ballet somewhat static—legitimately so, considering its nature and style—but the transitional movement is occasionally awkward or seemingly illogical, and there are some grotesqueries that are no longer as witty as they may have seemed in the beginning. The main trouble with *Apollo* is simply its inability to compare favorably with Balanchine's more recent works in either power of invention, mastery of structure, or depth of feeling.

The ballet was well served by its performers. André Eglevsky, who had taken the role before, looked well, if a trifle heavy, as Apollo, moved with dignity through his solo passages, looked oddly puzzled by the antics of his half-sisters, and was above all a fine partner in concerted movement. Maria Tallchief as Terpsichore, Tanaquil LeClerc as Polyhymnia, and Diana Adams as Calliope were uniformly excellent. Miss Adams, in particular, handled her overly literal variation as the muse of poetry with admirable tact and gracefulness. The brief roles of Apollo's Mother and the two Handmaidens were taken by Barbara Milberg, Jilana, and Irene Larsson.



Melton-Pippin

Jerome Robbins as Tyl Ulenspiegel

Karinska provided simple costumes for the dancers, and Jean Rosenthal lighted the ballet with her customary skill and sensitivity, although the cues were not accurately observed in this first performance. The setting was limited to some rocks and an insubstantial looking, poorly executed hill in the background. Put to effective use in the opening and closing tableaux, when the stage was darkened, it otherwise lent a tawdry air to the proceedings in front of it.

The ballet happily restores to currency one of Stravinsky's loveliest scores. Under Leon Barzin's direction the string section of the orchestra played it ably enough but without much finish or always the right sonorities.

The program opened with William Dollar's *The Duel*, in which Melissa Hayden again danced with extraordinary power. Francisco Moncion was Tancréd. Miss Rosenthal had darkened the lighting of the backdrop for the last section of the ballet, and the movements of Miss Hayden's legs, clad in black tights, were almost impossible to see.

Nora Kaye repeated her brilliant portrayal of the deadly Novice in Jerome Robbins' *The Cage*, in which Yvonne Mounsey was the Queen and Nicholas Magallanes and Mr. Maule the Intruders.

Balanchine's *La Valse* ended the program—a satisfyingly mature and consistently beautiful work, in contrast to *Apollo*. Returning to the leading female role, which she created, Miss LeClerc gave the ballet a more specific focus, logic, and emotional power through her sensitive miming and elegant dancing.

—R. E.

### A la Française

George Balanchine's little spoof with the punning title, introduced last September, came back to the repertoire in a performance of great charm, light as a butterfly's wing and so expert technically that the dancers almost seemed to be casually throwing their efforts away. André Eglevsky, as the tennis-player distracted by a sylphide; Maria Tallchief, as the sylphide who ultimately strips off her gauzy, winged tarlatan to reveal a fireman-red bathing suit underneath; and Janet Reed, as the blithe little girl who comes out second best, were the principals in the lightminded triangle. The choreography provides both a perfect vehicle for these three dancers and a suitable critical comment on the profundity of Jean Françaix' music.

The rest of the bill contained more familiar material. First performances of the season were allotted to Balanchine's *La Valse* and *La Française*. (Continued on page 31)

# Revivals Mark Season At Vienna Staatsoper

By MAX GRAF

THE Vienna Staatsoper (after triumphing with a production of Alban Berg's *Wozzeck*) packed its trunks in Salzburg at the end of August and returned to Vienna, where it promptly launched performances in both of the state-subsidized opera houses. These performances opened the new musical season on Sept. 1, for the Staatsoper is still the core of Vienna's musical life. One of the most gripping chapters in the musical history of Vienna will be that on the year 1945. After the Hitler hordes had been driven from the city, leaving it in ruins, with no lights, with no heat, with no bread, with no transportation, with no materials for scenery or costumes, the Vienna Staatsoper almost immediately began to give performances. A shivering and hungry public, wrapped in tattered coats and shawls, listened eagerly to Mozart operas. There are many inspiring chapters in the musical history of Vienna, but none so proud as this.

Five and a half years have passed since the Vienna Staatsoper rose from its ruins, and it has again become a renowned organization. It can boast some of the leading singers of the world. It has made successful guest appearances in many European countries. Its orchestra retains its distinguished reputation, and the Mozart performances that are the backbone of the Salzburg Festival keep alive a venerable tradition that goes back to Gustav Mahler, who introduced modern theatre, modern lighting, color, and dramatic realism into his productions. The Vienna performances of Richard Strauss's operas retain the imprint that the composer put upon them. How often did Strauss exclaim, when he went home after an ardent evening at the conductor's stand of the Staatsoper: "Vienna is my Bayreuth," or, "That kind of a performance one can give only in Vienna!"

THIS year's performances of *Wozzeck* at the Salzburg Festival proved that the Vienna Staatsoper can perform modern music brilliantly if the composer has established his fame—not an easy thing in Vienna, where such great modern composers as Schönberg, Stravinsky, Berg, Reger, and Bartók encountered opposition. Those who are old enough can still remember the hisses with which Vienna greeted Strauss's *Salome*, the storm of laughter at the first performance of *Also Sprach Zarathustra*, and the outrage over *Ein Heldenleben*. But this conservatism of Viennese musical taste has its good side. Vienna is rich in artists and institutions that preserve the classical traditions. It is an ancient musical culture that retains the patina of the past and imparts style, maturity, and depth to Viennese opera performances. On the other hand, Vienna also produces antiquated performances that confirm Gustav Mahler's epigram: "Tradition is slovenliness."

September brought two novelties by the Vienna Staatsoper. Verdi's *Simon Boccanegra* was revived at the Theater an der Wien. It had been absent from the repertory since 1934. This opera, like *La Traviata*, was a failure at its premiere. Twenty-four

years later, in 1881, Verdi sought to strengthen the score, using Boito's revision of the libretto; but nonetheless this opera is not as accessible to the public as are *Il Trovatore*, *Rigoletto*, and *Aida*. It is Verdian in every measure, and the venerable master was doubtless right when he wrote, "Some day they will discover that there is much in *Boccanegra* that cannot be despised." The opera is full of beautiful, emotionally and rhythmically powerful music. It is varied, full of surprises, and rich in dramatic situations. What it lacks is the strong unifying power of the Verdi who was able to sum up a whole dramatic development in one great climax and overwhelm his audience. There are many Verdis in this opera—not one single Verdi.

Paul Schoeffler, an imposing *Boccanegra*, dominated the action not only through his voice but through his dramatic intensity and nobility. Ludwig Weber sang Fiesco in sumptuous fashion, and Anton Dermota's tenor voice sounded beautiful in the role of Adorno. Hilde Zadek, in the role of Amelia, proved that her dramatic soprano voice is constantly improving. Josef Gielen, director of the Burgtheater, designed the costumes, and Robert Kautsky's scenery had the picturesque charm of old Genoa and the historic verisimilitude that is especially important in romantic operas. Rudolf Kempe conducted sensitively and securely.

A FEW days after Simon *Boccanegra*, which rounded out its Verdi cycle, the Staatsoper revived Franz Lehar's *Giuditta* at the Volksoper. This Lehar operetta once was in the repertory of the Vienna Staatsoper in the grand-opera house. At the time of Lehar's greatest fame, the Staatsoper wanted to honor him with a performance of *Giuditta*, which he considered his best work. *Giuditta* was produced in 1934, with Jarmila Novotna and Richard Tau-

tumes were designed by Adlmüller, the leading couturier of fashionable Vienna, who had also designed the dresses worn by many of the ladies in the boxes. Everything was there except the real feeling of a premiere, and the enthusiasm of Lehar first performances in the old days.

The first performance of Don Giovanni with George London in the title role could also be called a premiere. It certainly was an exciting premiere for the Viennese women, who have become ardent admirers of the young American singer. It was indeed difficult to resist a young Don Giovanni who was as handsome as Mr. London, and who sang with such an ingratiatingly warm baritone voice. Another newcomer to the Don Giovanni cast was Sena Jurinac, as Donna Elvira; her beautiful soprano voice was fused with intense emotion. The imposing Commendatore of Mr. Weber, the elegant Ottavio of Julius Patzak, the stylistically distinguished Donna Anna of Ilse Hollweg—all were enhanced by the loving care with which Clemens Krauss conducted. Erich Kunz obtained many laughs, but I missed the true buffo style in the Leporello of this excellent artist, who presented a charming Papageno at Salzburg and a sharply etched Beckmesser at Bayreuth.

New singers also appeared in the cast of Strauss's *Ariadne auf Naxos*, which weaves Italian buffo humor so ingeniously into the texture of a baroque opera seria and mingles dance and commedia dell'arte with Greek myth in fascinating ensembles. Sena Jurinac triumphed in the role of the Composer; Hilde Zadek was a new *Ariadne*, and she sang her great death aria with superb effect. The sold-out house and enthusiastic applause proved that Vienna still loves this work, which is so witty, so resourceful, and so full of decorative charm. Many of Vienna's most beautiful musical memories are awakened by this opera, for Lotte Lehmann won her first great success when she stepped into the role of the Composer at the last moment, and Strauss was especially fond of conducting it. *Ariadne auf Naxos* has been kept on the highest level of distinction by the Vienna Staatsoper.

IN a city where historical traditions are as strong as they are in Vienna, modern music has a difficult time. However, a recent concert proved that Vienna does have worthwhile and interesting modern music. Ferdinand Grossmann conducted the 25 singers of the Akademiekammerchor, an en-

vealed mystical devotion, expressed sometimes in harshly dissonant harmonies, and then again in very tender ones. The religious devotion of the Catholic church is seeking new paths in Austrian sacred music just as it is in Austrian church architecture. A hard, sharp, linear-dramatic style, which seems to revive the intensity of the fifteenth century, is replacing the resplendent baroque-ness that has dominated Austrian church music since the seventeenth century, including the religious music of the classic masters from Haydn to Bruckner.

The second half of the Grossmann concert was devoted to secular works, many of them highly original. David proved in some highly individual and humorous choral pieces that he is as much at home in the secular as in the sacred idiom. Other notable works were two settings of mediaeval poems by the 21-year-old Viennese composer Gerhard Ruehm, declaimed effectively to the percussive accompaniment of pianos treated in the manner of Stravinsky; and two twelve-tone pieces by Josef Mathias Hauer, who remains almost unknown at 68, although he was one of the inventors of atonality and a sort of Austrian Erik Satie who preached the gospel of an unromantic music of pure line and objectivity at the turn of the century. These two choruses sound remote from the world of sensuous experience; they seem to evolve freely in cosmic space, in a curiously transfigured world of sound where the musical forms seem almost immaterial as they evolve for the listener. How curious that music of such powerful originality should win the attention of musicians only today. Still more remarkable is the fact that this wholly spiritual music was composed in an earthy city like Vienna, and that these pure sounds actually aroused warm applause. Even Anton von Webern's music, which Virgil Thomson has called "stardust" and the "ultimate in pulverization," sounds positively massive compared to these works by Hauer.

## San Antonio Opens Orchestral Season

SAN ANTONIO.—The opening on Nov. 3 of the San Antonio Symphony's thirteenth season, under its new conductor, Victor Alessandro, was most reassuring. The many changes in orchestra personnel proved favorable, and a new seating arrangement was beneficial to the tonal balance and quality. The brass section was notably excellent. In a program devoted to works by Beethoven and Wagner, Mr. Alessandro's sensitive interpretations were genuinely commendable.

Because of illness Helen Traubel was forced to cancel her appearance as soloist in this concert. Astrid Varnay, vacationing in Arizona, was brought by private plane in time to sing the scheduled vocal numbers, and the audience clearly expressed its admiration and gratitude to the soprano for her performance.

For the remaining fourteen subscription concerts of the season, the soloists are Nicole Henriot, Nathan Milstein, Leonard Rose, Jorge Bolet, Leopold La Fosse, Frances Magnes, William Primrose, Vladimir Horowitz, and Whittemore and Lowe. In a performance of Verdi's *Requiem*, the singers will be Frances Yeend, Nan Merriman, Louis Roney, Yi-Kwei Sze, and the Singers' Society of the Symphony, Charles Stone, director. The San Antonio High School Chorus will be heard in Howard Hanson's *Drum Taps*, and the Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet will give one program.

Children's concerts at the Municipal Auditorium, youth concerts in school auditoriums, and concerts at military installations and on a state tour complete the orchestra's schedule for the season.

—GENEVIEVE TUCKER

## Series at both state-subsidized opera houses bring new productions of Verdi's *Simon Boccanegra* and Lehar's *Giuditta*; changes in other casts add interest

ber. Since then, seventeen years have brought war and also a revolution in taste. The Lehar operettas seem old-fashioned today; their librettos have lost their power of conviction, which even in former times needed the power of the footlights and the current fashions of the theatre to make them acceptable. Lehar's music seems technically primitive and patchy today, although the Staatsoper did everything it could to make the production a good one. Nothing was lacking on the lavishly decorated stage. Hanni Schall, who is also Miss Europe, displayed her charms most generously, revealing her lovely legs in honor of Lehar. A popular Vienna jazz band also took part in the proceedings. Ljuba Welitch sang the role of *Giuditta*, but she did not seem at home as a café singer. The cos-

semble which could scarcely be excelled in technical skill and interpretative virtuosity. Its program included no less than 22 works by eleven contemporary composers. Half of the program was devoted to sacred choral works—modern pieces in most of which a new Gothic style, an expressive Catholicism, is artfully blended with eloquent polyphony. Especially characteristic of this style are the choruses of Johann Nepomuk David, whose relentless harmonies remind one of mediaeval polyphony, and of Bach's daring in his motets. A similar development has been pursued by the Viennese composers Anton Heiller and Alexander Spitzmüller, whose eight-part chorus *Selig sind die Todten* breathes a richly imaginative adoration. Two choral works by Erich Marckhl also re-





## What's Your Neurosis?

Bet you never thought you were likely to become mentally ill just because you like to listen to more than one piece of music at a sitting. You are, though. Arthur Fultz said so. He is a psychologist who serves as director of musical guidance at the Functional Music Center, in Boston. That makes him a leading music therapist—whatever a leading music therapist is. I wonder after reading what he had to say.

"Some personal or social deficit is being satisfied when one attends a concert," said Mr. Fultz, speaking before the second annual convention of the National Association for Music Therapy, "and if that person has no deficit, he is exposing himself needlessly. It's just like eating three steaks in a row. Your hunger is satisfied by the first piece of meat; eating the others is merely continuing the initial enjoyment."

He went on to say that fifteen minutes is sufficient for a person to be exposed to music functionally (i.e., by attending a concert). "I do not advise protracted listening, unless a person is professionally trained," he added.

All this sounds rather ominous—or rather, such as it is it sounds rather ominous. Happy thought: maybe he was quoted out of context in the *New York Times* and really was only talking about psychiatric cases. If he wasn't—and in my book "one" means "anyone," without limitations—then deliver me from music therapists in general and Mr. Fultz in particular. I don't think that we would get along at all well together.

It isn't that I mind Mr. Fultz's saying that any one who attends a concert is compensating for some personal or social deficit. That seems a perfectly reasonable statement, if one is willing and able to accept the psychological jargon that is used. In the case of musical journalists the deficit is more narrowly definable as a financial one, but in any case it seems reasonable to assume that no one goes to a concert without a social or personal reason. In fact nobody does much of anything without being "socially" or "personally" motivated. If there were no "deficits" there would be no action on the part of anybody.

Maybe you go to concerts because being seen there makes you *de facto* "cultured" in the eyes of

the community; a similar chain of social pressures makes you belong to Kiwanis, so that you will be labelled "public-spirited." Maybe you go because your wife (for reasons best known to her) wants you to; the possibility is that you wear shoes around the house for the same reason. You wear a tie to the office to wipe out a potential social deficit; you go there at all at least partly to make it possible for you to wipe out the personal deficit of not being able to buy food.

And so on. What I do object to is having anyone set up arbitrary limitations on either the amount of music it is somehow "proper" for me to listen to or the number of steaks it is permissible for me to eat without becoming an abandoned creature. I have formed a picture of Mr. Fultz. He is, in my mind's eye, anyway, a wizened, timid man who always calls the weather bureau before going out of the house and then wears his rubbers anyway. He is afraid of experiences. He carries a calorie-counter around with him and always eats balanced meals, with a little wheat germ for seasoning. He never has a second cup of coffee to put his saccharine tablet (one) in. He has never known love. He doesn't like music; he takes it in doses as if it were yogurt or sulphur-and-molasses. Repulsive picture, isn't it? And that is a "leading musical therapist."

"Exposing himself needlessly," really! You would think that music was something like radium or habit-forming drugs—useful in small doses if absolutely necessary but dangerous if taken in quantity or over too long a period. By those standards a couple of Rossini overtures or one Strauss tone poem would be about all the listener (untrained in the mystic arts of music) could safely take. After that he should rush from the concert hall, closely pursued by the dangerous emanations of "continuing the initial enjoyment." Listening to a whole opera performance—of, say, *The Barber of Seville*—would be engaging in sheer gluttony of a highly dangerous and immoral kind.

Anyone who is sensible would be willing to admit that different people have different musical saturation points and that when an individual reaches the saturation point he might as well get up and sneak out of the hall or turn off the radio. Beyond the period of enjoyment there is very little point in staying at a concert unless you have to. Go home. Go out and have a drink or a sundae and then come back. Or just go to sleep. If the saturation point comes after fifteen minutes the chances are that you shouldn't have been listening in the first place.

This music-therapy approach to listening may work fine for psychotic patients. I hope it does; I also hope that none of the patients who are treated to just fifteen minutes of, say, Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, gets too traumatic a shock when he is cut off with the second movement in full flight, with an unresolved progression lingering in his ears.

So you have two alternatives: Limit your listening to an arbitrary span of time whether or not you are enjoying the music; or listen

until you feel that you have somehow completed an experience and had all you want. But don't listen too long, or something really awful is likely to happen to you. You might even wind up undergoing musical therapy under the guidance of Mr. Fultz.

## Pick Your Program

A new batch of recorded radio concerts has been made available by Broadcast Music, Inc., which just released a new series of programs selected by well-known personalities in all fields. The programs, called Your Concert Hall, are made up of one-hour chunks of serious music (if that's what you want to call it) selected by such notables as Alan Ladd, Fanny Hurst, Walt Disney, and Louis Armstrong, who as a hot-jazz figure is the only musician in the lot.

Future programs are to be selected by Ralph Kiner, the National League home-run king; Hildegard; Lauritz Melchior; various state governors; what BMI describes as "leaders of commerce and finance;" authors other than Miss Hurst; and film stars other than Mr. Ladd.

The works selected by Mr. Ladd included: Liszt's First Hungarian Rhapsody and Rimsky-Korsakoff's Scheherazade; by Miss Hurst, Beethoven's Moonlight Sonata and Tchaikovsky's Pathétique Symphony; by Mr. Armstrong, Waldteufel's Skaters Waltz, Un bel di, from Puccini's *Madama Butterfly*, and excerpts from Mendelssohn's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* music; and by Mr. Disney, Liszt's Second Hungarian Rhapsody, Sibelius' *The Swan of Tuonela*, and Beethoven's Pastoral Symphony (who here saw *Fantasia*?).



See why our symphony programs are the way they are?

In submitting her favorites, Miss Hurst said: "Radio comes bearing many gifts to our time, but one of the finest is the musical backdrop it supplies to everyday living. What a sedative and morale builder music can be to an era beset by war headlines! Consciously, sitting down and listening to a good musical program is, of course (sic.) the richer experience. But what a wonderful thing it is to be able to move through the indoor chores of the day—more difficult in the offices, but easily possible in the home—to the backdrop of well-chosen music. Its impact is gentle, its enjoyment, sometimes sub- or unconscious, but anyone who cultivates the lovely habit of music while you live is sure to be exposed to beauty and the happier for it."

Aside from her slight difficulty in making pronouns agree, Miss Hurst's statement is so coherent a presentation of a common position with regard to music that it seemed a shame not to render it in full. She and the musical therapists should get along fine, since she apparently doesn't listen "func-

tionally" at home but simply lets the Moonlight Sonata and the Pathétique wash over her and perfume her day with an odor spiritual, cultured, and somehow Good. She could install Muzak.

Music, after all, is a business as well as an art, and if BMI can sell its programs nobody should really complain. Maybe somewhere there will be a housewife who will stop her house-work, sit down, really listen, and be moved to seek out more music—without the intervention of a radio and without limiting herself to fifteen safe minutes assigned to making up some vaguely pathological social deficit.

## Tit-bits

- The custom of providing a free press bar for the critics at London premieres has been discontinued. They now have to buy their own drinks.
- Return address on a recent letter: The Music Store. Luis Salvia Janer: Music Critic-Dealer-Lover. Box 98, Rio Piedras, P. R.
- According to Jules Falk, a ramble through the apartment of Jacques Offenbach's grandson unearthed an unpublished cello concerto, untouched for more than a century, and more than fifty unknown manuscripts of operas, ballets, and miscellaneous compositions.
- Last summer, when Joseph Battista was trying to prepare his repertoire for the coming season, his Cape Cottage, Maine, studio was invaded by a swarm of hornets. His wife cleaned them out with a DDT bomb and up with an Electrolux.
- According to a hot dispatch from Mobile, Ala., Margaret Truman is not allergic to circus animals. The question came up when Secret Service operatives made the city auditorium move out the animals Miss Truman took over from when she gave a recital there. Kenneth L. Allen, Jr., of Columbia Artists Management, which booked the recital, denied the allergy, adding, "besides, she likes animals and has been to circuses."
- John de Toro, Milwaukee cement contractor, turned Maecenas in a small, family way when he hired the Milwaukee Civic Auditorium for performances of *Tosca* and *La Bohème*. His two daughters, Nathalie and Helen, have studied opera for two years in Italy, and he wanted them to make their debuts in style.
- I didn't even try to go, but there was an operatic premiere—and possibly dernière—in New York last month. The opera, called *Madame Butterfly Recovers*, with a score by one Louis Kroll, was given at the Community Church, 40 E. 35th Street.
- Cesare Siepi began the Metropolitan season without clothes or costumes of his own. Because of a dock-workers' strike his baggage was not unloaded from the Vulcania when it docked. He borrowed clothes until his own could make the return trip from Italy.

*Mephisto*

# ORCHESTRA CONCERTS

## Little Orchestra Society Introduces Martinu Concerto

Little Orchestra Society. Thomas Scherman, conductor. Gerald and Wilfred Beal, violinists; Paige Brooke, flutist; Bruno Labate, oboist. Town Hall, Nov. 5:

Serenade, B flat, K. 361.....Mozart  
Summer Scenes for flute, oboe, and strings.....Frank Wigglesworth, Jr. (world premiere)  
Concerto, A major.....Vivaldi (New York premiere)  
Concerto for Two Violins.....Martinu (New York premiere)

Bohuslav Martinu's Concerto for Two Violins and Orchestra, written for the nineteen-year-old twin violinists Gerald and Wilfred Beal, is captivating music, as skilled in workmanship as it is fresh in melody and rich in fantasy. Martinu composed the work in 1950. He wrote that he took great pleasure in helping the young violinists at the beginning of their careers. "I saw that I could make them happy, and I had the same feeling myself, which is a recompense to the artist. It is not every day in our times that an artist can have this feeling. There you have the background of it (the Concerto) in a nutshell—and this goes, probably, with my philosophy of music, if I have any."

It is not every day that one hears sweet, sound, intellectually vital music of this kind. The two solo instruments are used with the utmost skill both in solo roles and together, and the exciting solo cadenza is eloquent as well as ingenious. The orchestral writing is equally inventive,

and the harmony and counterpoint reveal the hand of a master. The brothers played the concerto splendidly, and Mr. Scherman and the orchestra played a well integrated accompaniment.

Vivaldi's Concerto in A major (for solo violin with another solo violin echoing it in the distance) was obviously inspired by the architectural peculiarities of Saint Mark's in Venice, where Vivaldi was leading violinist. The church had two choirs, offering stimulating opportunities for echo effects to composers. The work is routine, but Vivaldi's routine style is still very good. The Beal brothers played the solo parts with less freedom, tonal finesse, and individuality than they revealed in the Martinu concert — understandably, since the Martinu music is much more exciting.

The other of the evening's three novelties was less happy. Frank Wigglesworth is now working as the holder of a Rome Prize at the American Academy in Rome. He composed his Summer Scenes, four brief pieces, between July 15 and Sept. 15, 1951. The work is not program music, he has written, but merely a record of impressions of summer and such seasonal features as heat and birds. The music seldom rises above dreary commonplace either in the solo parts or in the orchestral accompaniment. The harmony is transparent, mildly dissonant, and totally uninteresting; the melody insipid.

Mozart's sumptuous B flat Serenade, for two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoon, four French horns,

two bassoons, and one double bass was beautifully played. It is ravishing in sound and unflagging in invention. Especially interesting are the solo passages for basset horn, offering an opportunity to make closer acquaintance with that attractive instrument.

—R. S.

## Cincinnati Symphony Plays New York Concert

Cincinnati Symphony. Thor Johnson, conductor. Eileen Farrell, soprano. Carnegie Hall, Nov. 11:

Sinfonia, E flat major, Op. 18, No. 1, for double orchestra.....J. C. Bach  
Four Last Songs: Frühling; September; Beim Schlagengehen; Im Abendrot.....Strauss  
Cumberland Concerto.....Harris (First time in New York)  
Ozean! du ungeheuer! from Oberon.....Weber  
Job, A Masque for Dancing.....Vaughan Williams

The Cincinnati Symphony had not played in New York since 1927, when Fritz Reiner brought it to the East on tour. To reintroduce the group Thor Johnson, its present conductor, put together a program of unusual scope and interest, ranging from a little-played sinfonia of Johann Christian Bach to the latest work of Roy Harris, commissioned by the Cincinnati Symphony and played in Cincinnati for the first time in October. The relatively unfamiliar contents of the program and the magnificent opulence of Eileen Farrell's singing in the four last Strauss songs and the great scene from Oberon tended to deflect attention from the orchestra's execution and from Mr. Johnson's qualities as a conductor.

Yet the playing of the ensemble was always reputable, even in the Bach sinfonia and the Strauss ac-



Gerald and Wilfred Beal

companiments, which were somewhat wanting in lucidity, precision, and tonal balance; and at its best, in the Harris and Vaughan Williams pieces, its performances were first-class. Perhaps these two pieces came off best because Mr. Johnson himself had a greater affinity for them than for the others. He presented an interpretation of Job that was both noble in stature and sensitive in inflection, and he made the problematic Cumberland Concerto abundantly clear, if not especially lovable.

The idiom of Harris' latest orchestral work stems more from  
(Continued on page 20)

# RECITALS

## Kurt Baum, Tenor Town Hall, Nov. 3

Kurt Baum has sung leading dramatic tenor roles at the Metropolitan since 1941, but this was his first recital appearance in New York. With Frederick Bland giving sound musical support at the piano he offered Tannhäuser's first-act aria from Mozart's The Magic Flute, a long group of lieder by Schubert and Strauss and a song by Lehar, Raoul's romanza from Meyerbeer's Les Huguenots, excerpts from Johann Strauss and Kalman operettas, songs in English by Barber and Bridge, and Nessun dorma, from Puccini's Turandot.

In all of these varied kinds of music Mr. Baum's performances were prevailingly satisfying. In the opera house he is noted for his ringing, secure high notes. Here were not only those (a superb B flat in Nessun dorma and C flat in the Meyerbeer romanza) but a concern for line, content, and diction and a good deal of

very acceptable mezza voce singing. His lieder interpretations, although not the most probingly introspective ever heard, were almost always well considered and communicative. Such songs as Schubert's Der Schiffer and Strauss's Ich Liebe Dich benefitted particularly from the strong masculinity of Mr. Baum's vocalism. It was pleasant and reassuring to hear a recital of such solid merits from a singer who until now had been considered so entirely an operatic personality.

—J. H. Jr.

## Solomon, Pianist Carnegie Hall, Nov. 4

As I recall the performances of Bach, Mozart, Brahms, Debussy, and Ravel at this concert I find myself in the curious situation of remembering each as the most beautiful until I think of the next one. For Solomon seemed one of those supremely gifted and dedicated interpreters who merge themselves with the personality of the composer. He played the Prelude and Fugue in C minor from Book I and the Prelude and Fugue in G

major from Book II of The Well-Tempered Clavier with wonderful lucidity, warmth, and stylistic perception. The voices carried on an animated dialogue with no sense of effort; the ornaments were impeccable. His performance of the Mozart Sonata in D major, K. 576, was tonally exquisite; the contrapuntal ingenuity of the music was masked with exactly the right touch of playful elegance. Like Wanda Landowska, Solomon approaches Mozart with the harpsichord and the early piano in mind as guides to sonority and style.

Even Brahms's F Minor Sonata, which is beginning to show the effects of time, sounded fresh and inspired. Solomon did not try to make it more palatable by omitting the repeats or hurrying any of the episodes. On the contrary, he lingered over them affectionately, with the result that the work seemed twice as short as it does in the hands of less perceptive and accomplished artists.

Debussy's La Cathédrale Engloutie and Ravel's Une Barque sur l'Océan were miracles of color and subtle pedalling. Wave after wave of sonority was built up, like the layers of an impressionistic painting, enriching without obscuring the basic images. A dazzling performance of Ravel's Toccata led to encores.

—R. S.

## New Friends of Music Town Hall, Nov. 4, 5:30

A deeply moving tribute to the late Artur Schnabel and the New York debut of the Quartetto Italiano, a distinguished ensemble founded six years ago in Venice, made the opening concert of the sixteenth season of the New Friends of Music one of the most engrossing that it has offered in many years. Although this season's programs are being devoted to Beethoven, Purcell, Handel, and six contemporary composers, Brahms's Sonata in G major for Violin and Piano was the work played by Joseph Szigeti and Mieczyslaw Horszowski in memory of Schnabel. The grave beauty, contained intensity, and musical pene-



Solomon

Kurt Baum

tration of their performance would have delighted the great pianist, who was especially fond of this sonata. Schnabel appeared many times in the New Friends series. His cycles of Schubert piano solo sonatas and four-hand compositions (the latter with his son Karl Ulrich) and his performances of Mozart piano concertos with Fritz Stiedry conducting the New Friends of Music Orchestra are precious memories today to those who were fortunate enough to hear them.

The Quartetto Italiano is made up of four young artists—Paolo Borciani and Elisa Pegreffi, violinists, Piero Farulli, violist, and Franco Rossi, cellist. They have achieved an extraordinary perfection of balance, smoothness of ensemble, and blending of tone. The attacks were always precise; the phrases interwove flawlessly; the sound was unfailingly lovely in quality. Playing from memory has probably given added concentration and finish to their interpretations. They had chosen Beethoven's Quartets, Op. 18, No. 6, in B flat major, and Op. 59, No. 3, in C major, for this program. Beautiful as these performances were, they were deficient in two important respects. They lacked a wide, flexible dynamic range, and boldness of imagination. Perhaps these young artists have whittled down their tones and temperaments too much in order to achieve perfection of ensemble. At any rate, they vouch-  
(Continued on page 16)



The Quartetto Italiano



## Concerts, Recitals, and Ballet In Full Chicago Schedule

FOR the second program of its Thursday-Friday series, on Oct. 18 and 19 in Orchestra Hall, the Chicago Symphony was conducted by Rafael Kubelik in Bach's First Brandenburg Concerto; Roy Harris' Fifth Symphony; and Brahms's Second Piano Concerto, with Gina Bachauer as soloist. Both the Bach and Brahms works proceeded at a somewhat cumbersome pace, but the Harris symphony was given an electric performance. Miss Bachauer's playing was difficult to assess; she seemed to try to give vitality to the concerto, but there was too great a gulf between her concept of the music and the conductor's for any positive results.

The Oct. 25 and 26 program was devoted entirely to concertos. Frank Martin's bright Concerto for Seven Wind Instruments, Timpani, Percussion and String Orchestra proved a refreshing opening work. It was followed by Beethoven's Triple Concerto, with Joseph Fuchs, violinist; Leonard Rose, cellist; and George Schick, pianist, as the soloists. They and the conductor were of one mind concerning the charm of the score, and they provided a sparkling performance of real stature. Mr. Fuchs and Mr. Rose were also heard in a well-integrated version of Brahms's Double Concerto.

Claudio Arrau appeared in the pair of concerts on Nov. 1 and 2, giving a rather lackluster performance of Liszt's Second Piano Concerto. It had little fire in the bravura passages or real sentiment. The brightest spot in the program was occupied by Schönberg's Five Pieces for Orchestra, Op. 16, a difficult score handled with commendable skill by Mr. Kubelik and the orchestra. The applause of the audience was more than polite.

Ruggero Ricci made his first appearance here with an orchestra in the Nov. 8 and 9 program. In Mozart's D major Violin Concerto, K. 218, he displayed a beautiful lyric gift. His phrases were finely arched and his tone was unusually pure. Mr. Kubelik conducted a well-proportioned accompaniment. He also presented Bartók's Concerto for Orchestra, which was played by the ensemble with some tautness but also real virtuosity.

In the Tuesday series, Miss Bachauer was soloist in Rachmaninoff's Third Piano Concerto, on Oct. 16, and Dudley Powers, the orchestra's principal cellist, was soloist in Tchaikovsky's Variations on a Rocco Theme.

The tentative and slipshod performances with which the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo began its two-week engagement at the Civic Opera House on Oct. 15 were replaced by polished ones by the time the engagement was over. Much of the credit for the rejuvenation of the company was apparently due Léonide Massine and Frederic Franklin, who rehearsed the dancers extensively. The last presentations of Swan Lake had the necessary elegance, and Massine's Capriccio Espagnol was given a triumphant revival, with the choreographer dancing in a leading role.

To Victoria de los Angeles went the honor of opening the recital season here. The soprano's singing in Orchestra Hall on Oct. 7 set a standard most vocalists will find it difficult to surpass. Patrice Munsel, in an Orchestra Hall appearance on Oct. 14, devoted most of her program to lyric-soprano music, which seemed less congenial to

her than coloratura music. For her Chicago debut, Mary Davenport sang a comprehensive and taxing program in Fullerton Hall. The contralto's uncommonly fine voice was uncomfortably large for a hall of this size, and her musicianship was not always completely secure. Anita Jordan, a lyric soprano of fragile charm, sang in Kimball Hall on Oct. 21, making her best impression in Schubert's *Der Hirt auf dem Felsen*, in which she had the able support of Walter Wollwage, clarinetist.

Risë Stevens, in her Orchestra Hall recital on Nov. 4, was at her most convincing in a group of Wolf lieder, which she invested with wholehearted sincerity and real musicianship. The following evening at the same hall, Carol Smith was heard in her first major recital here. The contralto has a generous-sized voice of great warmth and range, and her performances carried conviction even when not fully mature musically. At Fullerton Hall, on Nov. 7, Agatha Lewis presented a distinguished program of music by Hindemith, Pergolesi, Ravel, Milhaud, and Canteloube. She was most effective in Ravel's *Histoires Naturelles*.

In his distinguished recital in Orchestra Hall on Oct. 16, Solomon gave Brahms's F minor Sonata a performance at once patrician in elegance and warm in humanity. Zadel Skolovsky appeared to be under a nervous strain in his first Chicago recital, at Orchestra Hall on Oct. 28, but his tone was often beautiful, his fingers deft, and his sense of the dramatic exciting. Friedrich Gulda, playing in the same hall on Nov. 6, gave a perfect presentation of Haydn's Sonata No. 34, in E flat major, and a thoughtful and probing one of Beethoven's Sonata in A flat major, Op. 110. Clara Siegel and Zina Aleskow, playing with good co-ordination and sensitive insight, offered a piano-duet recital at Fullerton Hall, on Nov. 9. Their program included Hindemith's Sonata and Schubert's Andantino Varié and Rondo Brilliant on French themes.

Jascha Heifetz' recital in Orchestra Hall on Oct. 21 brought the beautiful tone and technical perfection customarily associated with his artistry.

The opening concert, on Oct. 17 at Fullerton Hall, of a series by the Roosevelt College String Quartet showed a commendable advance in the ensemble's growth in musical stature. The playing of its members—Oscar and David Chausow, Bernard Senescu, and Harry Sturm—has become well integrated, and they gave a particularly fine performance of Walton's A minor Quartet.

The Fine Arts Quartet began its season in a new home on Oct. 24. Thorne Hall proved to be kindly disposed in its acoustics to the group, which sounded resonant and full-bodied.

The Salzburg Marionette Theatre gave a series of four performances at Kimball Hall on Nov. 6, 7, and 10. The puppets of this excellent company held its large audiences fascinated.

Nov. 13 brought the opening of an Orchestra Hall series called Twilight Concerts, given at 5:45 and aimed at businessmen, businesswomen, and students. The well-attended initial concert was given by John Halloran's Choralists, an admirably disciplined and responsive group, producing a beautiful tone. In performances of Bach's music, however, the director's



AMERICAN COMPOSERS

Three composers—Raymond Du Page, Florence Anderson, and Gid Waldrop—whose works were played in the recent annual Symposium of American Orchestral Music in Rochester confer with Howard Hanson, conductor

stylistic treatment was frequently questionable.

A Kimball Hall recital was given by Leon Kirkpatrick, pianist, on Oct. 28. Fullerton Hall recitals were given by Josef Piastro, violinist, on Nov. 6, and Helen de Jager, pianist, on Nov. 13.

—LOUIS O. PALMER

## Rochester Holds 1951 Symposium Of American Music

ROCHESTER, N. Y. — The annual Symposium of American Orchestral Music, played by the Eastman-Rochester Symphony under Howard Hanson's direction, opened the 27th season of American Composers' Concerts here in Kilbourn Hall. Three programs were given on Nov. 5 and 6, and in two sessions on Nov. 7 works from these programs were repeated.

Twelve works were presented for the first time—William Ward's Symphony No. 2, in one movement; William Parks Grant's Rhythmic Overture; Clifton Williams' Rondo Concertante; Wilson Osborne's Elegy; the Adagio from Walter Hartley's Triptych; Paul Fetler's Symphony No. 2; Carl Wirth's Comes Another Spring, for baritone and orchestra; Robert Wykes's Sinfonia for Orchestra; Harold Brown's Three Symphonic Movements; Florence Anderson's Ballet Suite—Alice in Wonderland; Robert McBride's Concerto for Violin, Variety Day (the movements are titled Sock 10-G, Lush Pix Mix, and B. O. Hypo); and Richard Du Page's Polyrhythmic Overture.

One work had its United States premiere, John J. Weinzwieg's Suite for Flute and Strings.

Other compositions played were Ingram Walters' Overture to Idyllwild, Herbert Inch's Holiday Overture, Richard Morse's Song for Strings, Max Myover's Vocalise for Contralto and Strings, and Gid Waldrop's Symphony No. 1.

Ann Mason was the soloist in the Myover work, Joseph Mariano in that by Weinzwieg, David Meyers in that by Wirth, and Millard Taylor, concertmaster of the orchestra, in that by McBride.

The works repeated in the two final orchestral sessions, representing audience preference, were those by McBride, Myover, Fetler, Wirth, Osborne, Hartley, Morse, and Wykes.

The series of fourteen concerts constituting the 29th season of the Rochester Philharmonic opened on Nov. 1, with Guy Fraser Harrison, conductor of the Oklahoma City Sym-

phony, as guest conductor. Erich Leinsdorf, musical director of the orchestra, is conducting the remaining programs. The soloists for the season are Oscar Levant, Rudolf Firkusny, Szymon Goldberg, and Mack Harrell.

The Rochester Civic Orchestra will be heard under six guest conductors as well as under Paul White, associate conductor, during the 1951-52 season. The opening concert, on Oct. 21, was under the baton of Samuel Antek. The other guest conductors are Frank Briefi, Harry Farbman, Richard Duncan, Max Goberman, and George Hoyer.

On Nov. 4, the Verdi Grand Opera Company presented *Rigoletto*, in the Municipal Auditorium. Gino Bechi sang the title role; Carmen Gracia, Gilda; Lorraine Calcagno, Maddalena; Alceste Laurenti, the Duke; and Virgilio Lazzari, Sparafucile. Carlo Moresco conducted.

## Orchestral Season Starts in Tel Aviv

TEL AVIV. — The Israel Philharmonic opened its sixteenth season on Oct. 6, with Karl Rankl, until recently music director of the Covent Garden Opera, as guest conductor. Mr. Rankl replaced Issay Dobrowen, who was supposed to have conducted the first two subscription series but who became suddenly ill at the last moment.

The second series began on Oct. 28, with Mr. Rankl again conducting and Alexander Uninsky as soloist in Prokofiev's Third Piano Concerto.

Two special concerts were given by the orchestra on Oct. 22 and 27, when Mischa Elman, on a recital tour of the country, appeared as soloist, playing the Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto. Mr. Rankl conducted.

In addition to the ten repetitions of each subscription program already being given, the orchestra management has put ten of the special concerts on a subscription basis in Tel Aviv and five in Haifa. In the former city this special series is repeated twice. The number of subscribers to orchestral series in Tel Aviv is now almost 10,000.

## Prokofiev Reports Progress on New Works

Moscow.—In a recent statement, Serge Prokofiev reported that he has nearly completed a new ballet called *The Stone Flower*, which "depicts the joy of Soviet man in his creative labor," and is also working on a symphonic poem dedicated to the canal linking the Volga and Don rivers that will reflect "the joy of creation our people are now experiencing."

# Musical America

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## Opera for the People: A Blueprint for the Future

Herbert Graf's book *Opera for the People*, reviewed elsewhere in this issue, merits the thoughtful attention of all those who are vitally concerned over the future course of musical development in this country. On the basis of fifteen years' experience in the opera houses of this country and a longer knowledge of the operatic theatres of Europe, Mr. Graf comes to the conclusion—inescapable for anyone who will examine the true facts—that the United States still lags far behind the rest of the Western world in the cultivation of the operatic art. We have only two first-line opera houses, in New York and San Francisco. Both of them are hampered by severe budgetary limitations. Although there are brief annual flashes of operatic activity in a good many other cities, we nowhere possess any permanently established secondary opera houses with extensive schedules, except the New York City Opera Company in the City Center. The limited rations of opera in Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, New Orleans, San Antonio, and elsewhere, reveal praiseworthy intentions as far as they go; but in none of these cities is there either the permanent, resident producing staff or the fully equipped plant needed to achieve productions on the highest artistic level.

Mr. Graf does not upbraid us for permitting our opera organizations to make so poor a showing alongside the subsidized theatres of Europe. He has lived here too long and identified himself with American traditions and problems too completely not to assume a sympathetic rather than a disciplinary attitude. But he is not content to envisage a future no more fruitful than the past. With plans, charts, and tables he sets forth a flexible, far-reaching scheme for the establishment of civic opera enterprises in all the major cities. In his mind's eye he sees modern opera houses dotted across the country, giving a substantial repertory of well-prepared works, old and new, and providing professional training for the gifted singers, conductors, directors, designers and technicians many of whom now have to go abroad to perfect their art or else make the compromise of turning to musical comedy, radio, or television for a means of livelihood.

The fundamental feature of Mr. Graf's plan is a full-fledged merger of the administrative and musical personnel of the symphony orchestras and the proposed opera companies. One of the peculiarities of the musical development of this country has been its one-sidedness; symphonic music has been cherished and promoted almost everywhere, while operatic music has been given the cold shoulder. Mr. Graf does not propose that the orchestras should go into operatic production on the side, as they do in a few instances now. Rather he insists that the operatic phase be built up to match the symphonic.

Of course Mr. Graf is aware that the establishment of such a project requires money. First-rate opera, he points out with the calmness of one who accepts the inevitable, has always been a deficit operation everywhere, and the present scale of costs will not permit it to pay its way in this country in the foreseeable future. There is only one solution: Subsidy. Mr. Graf does not belabor this point in his book. He has presented the facts, indicated the aims we should strive to attain, given us a considered proposal for an administrative layout adapting European procedures to American needs,

and prepared plans of the kind of theatre-concert hall units he thinks we ought to build. The rest is up to us.

To those acquainted with musical finance, this whole enterprise may look like a Utopian dream. And indeed it will remain one until we recognize the truth as unshrinkingly as Mr. Graf has. The future of both orchestral and symphonic music in this country depends upon subsidy. Whether from the local, state, or national government does not matter, but there must be public aid. We are the richest country in material goods, but we are spiritually poorer than Mexico, Argentina, Israel, and Denmark—not to mention virtually every other country in the Western world—in our failure to concede that the arts are a matter of public profit, meriting assistance from the public purse.

## John Alan Haughton:

### Musical America—1918-51

John Alan Haughton was able, by temperament and by experience, to view the musical panorama against an unusually wide horizon. Trained as a musician, he embarked in his youth on a career as a singer and as an actor with the Washington Square Players, the group that later grew into the Theatre Guild. Before the first World War he decided to turn to musical journalism and to such literary activities as the translation and adaptation of operatic librettos. At the same time he kept in touch with the vocal field through teaching singing. As a music critic, his wide knowledge of music and literature gave him a broader perspective and a more dependable basis for judgment and opinion than most apostate performers possess, while his sympathy for the problems confronting the practicing artist—particularly of the singer—kept his critical views human and unacademic. The richness of his critical writing, as it appeared in this magazine over three decades, resulted from the constant and flexible interplay between the practical aspects of his judgment on the one hand and the theoretical and intellectual aspects on the others.

During the last four or five years his health became more and more precarious. He was forced to withdraw, partly at first, and then entirely, from the concert and opera criticism to which he had previously contributed so prominently. As his eyesight failed and his co-ordination at the typewriter keyboard lessened, his contributions to the pages of MUSICAL AMERICA decreased in scope and frequency, and finally, to the regret of everyone, disappeared almost wholly.

But John Alan Haughton was not one to admit the possibility of retirement. For him life was not living at all unless he somehow kept active. Even when the trip of a single block from his home to Steinway Hall required him to spend the last ounce of his reserve energy, he appeared at his desk ready to comment upon affairs of the moment with sallies, at once acid and humane, that kept things in a sensible perspective. His memory was an invaluable store of knowledge to younger writers. We of the MUSICAL AMERICA staff, who continued to know him after he had dropped out of our readers' view, recall with tenderness the devotion to the magazine and to music that kept him at work even when his life was ebbing. But more than this we remember with admiration the informed gusto of his conversation and the acute operation of his mind. Above all other considerations, John Alan Haughton would want to be remembered as one who, in the fullest sense of the expression, never lost his lust for life.



# Musical Americana

**A**MONG the singers and instrumentalists who took part in the annual benefit concert for the Bagby Music Lovers' Foundation fund on Nov. 27 at the Waldorf-Astoria Hotel were **Victoria de los Angeles, Nell Rankin, Leonard Warren, Jerome Hines, and Robert Goldsand.** The foundation provides pensions for aged and indigent opera and concert artists. In another benefit, this time on behalf of the American Fund for Israel Institutions and scheduled for Dec. 17 at the same hotel, the program will be given by **Lily Pons;** the Philadelphia Orchestra, **Andre Kostelanetz** conducting; **Jerome Robbins** and **Nora Kaye;** and representatives of the legitimate theatre.

When the rebuilt Free Trade Hall in Manchester, England, was opened recently with a nine-concert, four-orchestra festival, the soloists were **William Primrose, Witold Malczewski, and Kirsten Flagstad.** **Tito Schipa** gave his farewell London recital on Nov. 19 in the Royal Festival Hall. Other London recitalists during November were **Lili Kraus, Hans Hotter, Joseph Schuster, Sigi Weissenberg, Andor Foldes, and Frank Glazer.** Soloists with orchestras in the English capital included **Edmund Kurtz** and **Richard Farrell.**

After an absence of almost a year, **Zino Francescatti** returned to this country on Nov. 14. He will begin his thirteenth American tour on Jan. 3 and 4 in Washington, where he will give sonata recitals with **Robert Casadesu.** Arriving aboard the S.S. Vulcania on Nov. 27 was **Guido Cantelli,** who will conduct both the NBC Symphony and the New York Philharmonic-Symphony this season. **Anton Dermota** will give a number of recitals in Yugoslavia before making his debut with the Metropolitan Opera Company later in the season. A swollen jaw, resulting from an infected molar, forced the cancellation of the recital **Marjorie Lawrence** was to have given at Hunter College on Nov. 10. By coincidence, the soprano was scheduled to replace **Kathleen Ferrier,** whose appearances there and elsewhere in America were cancelled by her having to undergo an operation in England this fall. **Michael Rabin** will make a tour of Australia and New Zealand in the spring of 1952. **Jean Casadesu's** American tour, which will include over thirty concert engagements, began with his television debut, on the Faye Emerson show on Nov. 17.

In recent concerts by the Brussels Philharmonic the conductors were **Eleazar de Carvalho, Clemens Krauss, and Igor Markevitch.** **Eugene Conley** left New York by plane on Nov. 14 to begin rehearsals as Arrigo in Verdi's *I Vespri Siciliani*, which will open the La Scala season in Milan on Dec. 7. The opera revival will be staged by **Herbert Graf** during a few weeks' leave of absence from his directing assignments at the Metropolitan. **Angna Enters** ended a two-week engagement in London on Nov. 5. The mime was sponsored by the Arts Council of Great Britain.

**Fritz Reiner** conducted the Xalapa Symphony in concerts in Mexico City before joining the Metropolitan for the new season. **Maryan Filar** will make his New York debut as soloist with the Philadelphia Orchestra, under **Eugene Ormandy's** direction, on Jan. 1. The Polish pianist made his American debut at Chautauqua in the summer of 1950. **Maro and Anahid Ajemian** opened their second European tour on Oct. 4. The piano and violin duo will be heard in Germany, France, Austria, Holland, Switzerland, and Italy. They gave the premiere of **Ernst Krenek's** Double Concerto, for piano, violin, and orchestra, with the Donaueschingen Symphony, under **Hans Rosbaud's** direction. The work is dedicated to them. **Richard Ellsasser** completed on Nov. 4 a series of Los Angeles recitals in which he played the organ works of Bach from memory. He then left on a transcontinental tour that would keep him occupied until he returned to Los Angeles to conduct Handel's *Messiah* on Dec. 16. **Maurice Wilk** crossed paths with the **Juilliard String Quartet** and the **Hall Johnson Choir** during a recital tour of the America Houses in Germany.

After finishing her season with the New York City Opera Company, **Patricia Neway** was scheduled to return to Paris to sing the leading soprano role in **Gian-Carlo Menotti's** *The Consul*, being given in French. She has already sung the role there in English. **Florence Mercur,** celebrating her tenth anniversary as a concert pianist this season, is now making her seventh coast-to-coast tour.

**Ricardo Manin,** known in this country as **Richard Manning,** was tenor soloist in the Italian premiere of *Torquato Tasso*, in Milan late in October. He then went to Rome for opera and concert appearances. **Helen Masloff** opened a tour of the South on Oct. 13. The soprano will be heard with the Norfolk Symphony as well as in numerous recitals.



Heinrich Rehkemper as Dr. Athanasius and Martha Schellenberg as Wendelin in a scene from the second act of Hans Pfitzner's *Das Herz*, as presented at the Munich National Theatre in 1931

## WHAT THEY READ TWENTY YEARS AGO

### A Pfitzner Premiere

Hans Pfitzner, one of the most distinguished figures in contemporary German music, has departed from his usual psychological profundities and produced a romantic opera, *Das Herz* (The Heart), which had simultaneous premieres at the Berlin State Opera and the Munich National Theatre on Nov. 12 . . . the book written by Hans Mahner-Mons, has a certain degree of style and the ethical content should be sufficient explanation of its appeal to Pfitzner . . . the scene is laid in those graceful days of the Middle Ages and deals with the fate of a certain Dr. Athanasius, whose knowledge of necromancy and the mysterious ways of Black Magic was spurred into action by ambition and cupidity . . . unfortunately, both dramatic and musical interest waned continuously after the first act . . . Wilhelm Furtwängler conducted superbly.

### What Was It?

Richard Strauss is working on a new symphony, a work without a program, according to recent reports from Germany. Two movements are already completed. Strauss is also completing his new opera, *Arabella*, which is expected to be ready for its world premiere at the Dresden Opera in a year.

### Debut Violinist

The first American appearance of the German violinist Adolf Busch, as soloist in the Brahms Violin Concerto with the Boston Symphony under Serge Koussevitzky, was the event of the Nov. 13 and 14 concerts. . . . His performance suffered not one whit in comparison with past notable ones and was generally felt to be of persuasive, revealing beauty.

### Boris Redivivus

Boris Godounoff at the Chicago Opera matinee of Nov. 7 had as its outstanding feature the powerful interpretation of the haunted Tsar by Vanni-Marcoux. . . . A new makeup, which disregards the whiskers and gives to Boris a Mongolian aspect, with slanting eyes and a thin, drooping mustache, aroused much interest.

### Three Crises—One Settled

Vienna Opera Crisis Provoked by Economic Hardships. All contracts cancelled as new and more imperative balancing of budget is rendered imperative (headline).—The Society of the Friends of Music in New York will disband unless some new source of financial support is found, according to its executive vice-president, William Matheus Sullivan. The concert of Nov. 22, scheduled to be

conducted by Artur Bodanzky, has been cancelled. . . . President Hoover has announced that the plan to abolish the United States Navy Band, as a part of the Government's economy program, has been discarded. The organization will remain as the national service band of the Navy.

### Novelties in Chicago

The first novelty of the Chicago Civic Opera season was Max von Schillings' *Mona Lisa*, with Frida Leider in the title role. . . . Two more followed in the triple bill including Leon's *L'Oracolo*, the choruses and ballet from Prince Igor, and Puccini's *Gianni Schicchi*. . . . neither of the first two had been given by the Civic forces before. Massenet's *Hérodiade* returned after an absence of five years, with Mary McCormic as Salomé.

### Farewell to Gerry

Geraldine Farrar last week confirmed reports that she would conclude her concert career with the recitals booked for her this season. She will, however, continue to sing in radio engagements, a field in which she made a successful debut this season.

## On The Front Cover

**R**OBERT MERRILL made his first public appearances as a boy soprano in Brooklyn, where he was born. He was given his first music lessons by his mother, and later he studied singing with Samuel Margolies. After appearances as baritone soloist on NBC radio networks, at Radio City Music Hall, and with a touring concert ensemble, he won the Metropolitan Auditions of the Air in the spring of 1945. He made his debut at the Metropolitan on Dec. 15, 1945, as the elder Germont in *La Traviata*. He subsequently sang leading roles in several operas, and he was the Rodrigo in the revival of *Don Carlo* that opened the 1950-51 season. In 1949 he sang in a radio performance of *La Traviata*, conducted by Arturo Toscanini and just recently released on records. He has appeared in recital and as soloist with symphony orchestras, on television, and at governmental functions in Washington. One of his many RCA Victor recordings received the Recorded Annual Music Award in 1946. In 1948 he sponsored a contest for one-act operas in English, and last spring he went to Hollywood to make his first motion picture.

## RECITALS

(Continued from page 12)

safed neither the volume nor intensity of tone to do justice to the mighty fugal finale of the C major Quartet, nor did their playing of the last movement of the B flat Quartet, for all its exquisite shading and phrasing, encompass the tragic vision that Beethoven wrote into La Malinconia. Nonetheless it was a pleasure to hear such expressive, tasteful, and technically sensitive playing. The audience was obviously delighted with the newcomers.

—R. S.

### NAACC Concert

Town Hall, Nov. 4, 3:00

This was the season's first concert of the National Association for American Composers and Conductors. Robert Sanders greeted the audience in place of the president, Robert Russell Bennett, and Sigmund Spaeth was guest speaker. The first half of the program listed more or less conservative music—Bernard Heiden's Sonata for Horn and Piano, played by John Barrows and Vera Brodsky; and Charles Griffes' Piano Sonata, played by Jean Williams. In the second half, the selections were more advanced in idiom, particularly Jack Beeson's bleak but intellectually admirable Five Songs, in which Hazel Gravell was the soprano and Arpad Sandor the accompanist. Brighter in mood, at least in its first three delightful movements, was Sol Berkowitz' Serenade for Wind Instruments, played by the Fairfield Woodwind Quintet. The sudden shift to somberness in the last movement came as rather a jolt, although the instrumentation here was just as charmingly idiomatic as in the previous movements. Jean Williams and Stanley Lock brought the concert to a close with André Singer's conventionally modern Sonatina for Two Pianos, Op. 26.

—A. B.

### Loy van Natter, Baritone Carnegie Recital Hall, Nov. 4

Loy van Natter's program for this, his third New York recital, was devoted to lieder by Schubert, Schumann, Brahms, Hugo Wolf, Erich Wolff, and Marx. It was a challenging list, but he achieved a degree of success with it. While Mr. van Natter's German diction was not all that it might have been, he managed to project the content of the texts with a respectable amount of conviction and persuasion. His light baritone voice was of pleasing quality, and he was able to color it somewhat for expressive purposes. A limited range, however, made it impossible for him to do justice to Brahms's Von ewiger Liebe and other songs containing relatively high notes. His musicianship was generally adequate, but he seemed wary of difficult intervals, and once or twice he strayed completely from the prescribed melodic line. Stewart Wille's accompaniments were usually accurate but too loud.

—A. H.

### Laurel Hurley, Soprano Town Hall, Nov. 6, 3:00 (Debut)

Laurel Hurley's successful first New York recital was sponsored by the Walter W. Naumburg Musical Foundation. The young Allentown, Pa. soprano was an experienced performer before she won this award. In 1943, at the age of sixteen, Miss Hurley appeared in the Schuberts' revival of The Student Prince, both on Broadway and on the road. She has toured with the Charles L. Wagner opera company; she sang in last summer's Central City opera season, and held one of the Metropolitan Opera's Kathryn Turney Long scholarships.

Miss Hurley chose her program with taste and an intelligent appreciation of her own special gifts. Her light, lovely, lyric voice was well suited to slow, sustained songs like Mozart's Ridente la calma, Duparc's Extase, and Howard Swanson's Night Song; her loving phrasing and purity of tone helped to make unusually moving performances of these. She had, too, a penchant for the subtle, shimmering wit of such items as Poulenc's Air Champêtre and Debussy's Fantoches. Her easy execution of coloratura pyrotechnics was dazzlingly displayed in Zerbinetta's aria from Strauss' Ariadne auf Naxos, which only an assured singer would dare present at a debut.

Miss Hurley might better have omitted, however, the aria, Ach, ich liebe, war so glücklich, from Mozart's Die Entführung aus dem Serail. Her voice lacked the body to convey its full dramatic impact, and her breath control could not always cope with the phrase-lengths. Her interpretations of lieder by Schubert, Wolf, and Strauss, which closed the program, were thoughtful but not up to the best achievements of this accomplished singer. Sergius Kagen was the excellent accompanist.

—A. B.

### Mieczyslaw Horszowski, Pianist Town Hall, Nov. 6

This singularly intimate and introspective recital reached its peak in a noble performance of Beethoven's Sonata in C minor, Op. 111. Mieczyslaw Horszowski commenced with a Prélude pour Piano (1943) by Pablo Casals, in its first New York performance. This is a pleasant, old-fashioned piece that sounds like Rachmaninoff, Brahms, and Schumann by turns, without ever hitting on an original idea.

Schumann's Kreisleriana followed, a perilous work to offer to modern audiences, with their taste for speed, excitement, efficiency, and overstatement. But Mr. Horszowski played it with understanding, contrasting its mood of tempestuous passion and tenderness without letting the structure break. German romanticism was succeeded by French neo-classic elegance in a highly polished performance of Ravel's Le Tombeau de Couperin. Mr. Horszowski included the Fugue and Menuet, which are often omitted by recitalists but which belong in the framework of the music.

Some pianists seek to stun their audiences with orchestral sonorities, incredibly rapid passages, savage force and rhythmic emphasis. They make each recital a sort of musical three-ring circus, with classical works as an opener, a modern piece to soothe the critics, and virtuoso war-horses at the close to charm the gallery. But Mr. Horszowski is concerned with music alone. He conceals rather than displays the prodigies of technique of which he is capable, and he is always in search of meaning rather than mere physical excitement in music. The many young piano students in his audience could not have had a more wholesome experience.

—R. S.

### Frieda Hempel, Soprano Town Hall, Nov. 7

In the years that have elapsed since she made her Metropolitan Opera



Eugene List



Frances Magnes



Laurel Hurley



Frieda Hempel



M. Horszowski

debut in 1912, Frieda Hempel has won for herself a very special place in the affections of lovers of fine singing. The freshness and vitality of her personality, the eminently fine placement that her voice has retained, and the real musical charm of her singing all go together to make her recitals events to be remembered.

For this program, her first since 1949, Miss Hempel explored some unfamiliar byways of the repertoire. Strattner's I Pray to Thee opened the recital, followed by an aria from Handel's Othello and Scarlatti's Già il Sole dal Gange. Then came what was said to be a first New York performance—the aria Charming Hempeline, from Bach's Wedding Cantata, with cello and oboe obbligato. Five of Brahms's folk-song settings ended the evening, and in between there were lieder by Schumann and Schubert. All of these were delivered on a high level of musicianship, and a large part of the time the listener could feel that Miss Hempel was accomplishing exactly what she set out to accomplish. The Scarlatti aria was brilliant. A tendency to flat marred some of the unfamiliar items, but the lieder were almost all achieved in a way that should be envied by many prominent singers of far tenderer years. Coenraad V. Bos was at the piano.

—J. H. Jr.

### Frances Magnes, Violinist Carnegie Hall, Nov. 7

Frances Magnes' playing at her recital was never less than absorbing. In the Schubert Duo, Op. 162, Miss Magnes achieved a performance of enchanting rhythmic impulse and infectious tunefulness. To Vivaldi's Little Suite in A major, which opened the program, the gifted young violinist brought a gorgeous array of color and emotional inflection. At times, however, Miss Magnes let her temperament run away with her. Her approach to the Vivaldi Suite was rather too fulsome for the best stylistic results; and in Brahms's D minor Sonata, while her conception was appropriate enough stylistically, her straining for tone produced some stridency of sound and, paradoxically, the slow movement was emotionally rather cool.

Miss Magnes introduced a new work—Tibor Serly's Chamber Folk Music, for violin, piano, and tarogato. David Garvey, the violinist's excellent accompanist, was the pianist here, and Francis Lantos played the tarogato, an ancient woodwind instrument introduced into Hungary from way of Asia. In sound it is close to the saxophone, but the highest tones of its two-octave range resemble the highest tones of the bassoon. The work itself consists of six brief movements based on Hungarian folk songs. Miss Magnes played it in glorious gypsy style.

—A. B.

### Eugene List, Pianist Town Hall, Nov. 9

Although Eugene List has made frequent New York appearances as concerto soloist during the past several years, this was his first recital here since 1940. In the meantime, he came into the international spotlight when, while serving in the United States Army, he was chosen to play

for President Truman and Joseph Stalin at the Potsdam Conference.

For this recital Mr. List chose a varied and balanced program of baroque, romantic, and modern music. Of the entire list Brahms's Variations on a Theme of Paganini (Book 1) was the work that seemed most congenial to his temperament. He was able to cope with most of its harrowing technical demands, and the tremendous volumes of sound he drew from the piano were in keeping with the nature of the composition. Parts of Dello Joio's Sonata No. 3 responded to Mr. List's tempestuous approach, but its lyrical sections were not very persuasively presented. Schubert's Sonata in A major, Op. 120, was offered without bombast, but also without a realization of its effervescent tunefulness and spontaneity. The subtleties of Schumann's Faschingsschwank aus Wien were lost in the same kind of heavy-handed performance that belabored Bach's Toccata in C minor.

—A. H.

### Toshiya Eto, Violinist Carnegie Hall, Nov. 9 (Debut)

Toshiya Eto, Japanese violinist, made a profound impression at his first New York recital, which coincided with his twenty-fourth birthday. The opening adagio of Handel's Sonata in E major alone was enough to immediately establish a place for him among the really good young violinists of the day. He at once set up standards of legato playing and sensuous tone that were to remain the norm for the entire evening. This sheer magnificence of sound became deeply affecting in a performance of Chausson's Poème characterized by extraordinary restraint and by tonal smoothness that encompassed every expression without forcing the emotional issue.

After graduating from the Tokyo Conservatory in 1948 and appearing in concert and as soloist with the two symphony orchestras of his native city, Mr. Eto came to the United States three years ago for further study. He is already a finished artist. There was nothing his phenomenal technique could not cope with; in Brahms's G major Sonata and Glazounoff's Violin Concerto display did not obtrude upon the refinement of his musical discourse. He was somewhat reserved about rapid playing, and sharper rhythmic accentuation would have given greater vitality to fast movements. Yet Mr. Eto's playing was beautiful throughout his distinguished recital. Vladimir Sokoloff was the sympathetic accompanist.

—A. B.

### Richard Dyer-Bennet, Tenor Town Hall, Nov. 10

Richard Dyer-Bennet's annual recital drew a large audience. A British group opened the program and another closed it. In between there was an American group and, by way of contrast, European offerings translated into English by the singer—including Martini's Plaisir d'amour, Schubert's Wohin?, and Ecco ridente in cielo, from Rossini's The Barber of Seville. The singer accompanied himself on the Spanish guitar, using his own transcriptions.

Mr. Dyer-Bennet demonstrated once again that he is an unimpeachable (Continued on page 18)

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## World Premiere And Debuts Mark Cincinnati Season

CINCINNATI.—The American debut of Irmgard Seefried was made in the Oct. 19 and 20 program of the Cincinnati Symphony, under the direction of Thor Johnson. Although the soprano's voice is not of unusual depth and sonority, she sang with exceptional musicianship and skill and a wealth of nuance. In the Et incarnatus est from Mozart's Mass in C Minor, K. 427, she made difficult figures seem effortless by the purity and simplicity of her delivery. Three Richard Strauss songs were sung with impressive understanding.

The world premiere of Roy Harris' Cumberland Concerto, commissioned by Mr. Johnson and the orchestra society, was another important event in the program. Although interesting in its exploitation of melodies, harmonies, and rhythms, the work seems rather shapeless in its failure to find an effective over-all structure.

In the Oct. 26 and 27 program, William Kapell played Rachmaninoff's Second Piano Concerto with a technical facility and brilliance that left nothing to be desired, but the emotional depth and power of the score were not completely projected. Erik Kahlson, first violist of the orchestra, played the solos in Berlioz' Harold in Italy with masterly eloquence and assurance.

Ralph Vaughan Williams' Job, A Masque for Dancing, was of paramount interest in the concerts on Nov. 3 and 4. Its performance was one of Mr. Johnson's outstanding accomplishments to date. James Melton was the genial soloist in works by Handel, Donizetti, Massenet, Lalo, and Medtner. An orchestral radiant version of Respighi's Pines of Rome concluded the program.

Of special interest in this season's concerts have been the local debuts of four recitalists. Friedrich Gulda displayed digital facility and striking sensitivity to the piano's resources in his program on Oct. 22; Tossy Spivakovsky again showed almost incredible technical skill and consummate artistry when he played here on Nov. 16; Gina Bachauer exhibited masculine technical vigor and feminine sensitivity in her debut on Oct. 25; and Michael Rabin performed with astonishing technical fluency when he gave a violin recital on Nov. 6.

The Music Drama Guild opened the season of musical events auspiciously on Oct. 7 and 8 with fine performances of Gianni Schicchi and The Medium. With Georgina Moon, Robert Menge, Charlotte Shockley, Faith Eymen, Robert La Camera, and Peggy Hawley in the cast, the production of The Medium compared very favorably with the original one in New York. Hubert Kokritz directed the production, and William Byrd conducted.

Louis Kohnop, a prodigy in his early years who has met with much success since he graduated from the Cincinnati Conservatory, returned to give a recital at the Cincinnati Woman's Club on Oct. 5. Abundant technique and impressive musicianship were apparent.

The Rodgers and Hammerstein Nights program was given here on Oct. 15; Gladys Swarthout gave a recital on Nov. 8; and the Ballet Russe de Monte Carlo gave two performances at Taft Auditorium on Oct. 31 and Nov. 1.

—MARY LEIGHTON

### Opera Musicians Win Salary Increase

A full agreement between the Metropolitan Opera Association and Local 802 of the American Federation of Musicians, which represents the

orchestra players, on terms of a new contract was not reached until the morning of Nov. 14, the day after the opera company opened its 1951-52 season. The contract, signed later that week, brought an increase of about ten per cent in the players' wages and an agreement in principle on a severance pay formula. The details of the latter remain to be worked out. Two-year contracts with the two other major unions involved at the Metropolitan, the Theatrical Protective Union, Local 1, representing the stagehands, and the American Guild of Musical Artists, representing the singers and chorus, were signed in 1950.

## Paris Ballet

(Continued from page 6)

of Europe today. The combination of the talents of Mr. Kochno, the administrative skill of Jean Robin, and the wide choice of skilled choreographers available to it, may yet firmly mark the Ballets des Champs-Élysées as the leading French dance enterprise of this decade. Its first six years of existence have justified its formation as a breakaway group. It survived the secondary breakaway of one of its founder-members, Petit. It has a clear artistic policy, and it should be able to command the talents capable of carrying out that policy.

A London season was given by the Ballet Rambert during October, in the course of which two new works were shown. Both were composed by young composers for the Festival of Britain, on themes of local significance to the cities in which they were first shown; both were choreographed by David Paltenghi. Fate's Revenge, a comedy fantasy of fashionable life in Bath in the eighteenth century, uses a good idea but blurs the idea with imitative choreography. The score, by Peter Tranchell, has no outstanding features; it is a workable, dullish series of episodes that give effective rhythmic support to the dancing.

Canterbury Prologue, given in Canterbury in July, is a balletic form of Chaucer Without Tears. A dozen connected episodes present a variety of the characters in the Canterbury Tales as they assemble at the Tabard Inn for their pilgrimage. Nearly all the scenes are of the same intensity and are filled with the same kind of exuberant, and somewhat formless, dancing. Peter Racine Fricker's music is bright and fascinating, soundly orchestrated for a small group of instruments, and possessed of enough rhythmic subtleties to be of interest in its own right without imposing its patterns on the choreography. Its thirteen sections are too similar in tempo, however, for theatrical effectiveness. Whether the ballet was so planned or not, the score settled for fast-paced dancing all the way through. The décors of both ballets are helpful if not actually brilliant.

### Seattle Symphony Engages Guest Conductors

SEATTLE.—The Seattle Symphony, which was left without a conductor when Manuel Rosenthal was recently barred from this country by the immigration authorities and ousted by the orchestra board, plans to give eight subscription concerts under guest conductors during the 1951-52 season. The conductors and dates of appearances are as follows: Arthur Fiedler, Jan. 14 and 28; Stanley Chapelle, Feb. 11; Alexander Hilsberg, Feb. 25; Sir Thomas Beecham, March 7 and 13; William Steinberg, March 25; and Gaetano Merola, April 8. Mr. Chapelle will also conduct four children's concerts, two high school concerts, and three Standard Hour broadcasts. Four out-of-town concerts will be conducted by Mr. Fiedler and Sir Thomas. Soloists in the subscription series will include Randolph Hokanson, pianist, and Eva Heimitz, cellist.

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## RECITALS

(Continued from page 16)

able folk-singer who can be trusted to bring forth such lovely items as the American The House Carpenter and the Scots Fine Flowers in the Valley. He was especially masterly in Elizabethan folk songs. His way with a ballad was, as always, apt and personal. His interpretations of Martini and Schubert were not without merit, but in Rossini he was out of his element. His voice had neither the carrying power nor the agility to indicate more than the shell of the florid aria. The high points of his recital were his intimately poetic deliveries of such ballads as I Ride an Old Paint, Sing Ivy, and Tom's Gone to Highlow.

—A. B.

### Guiomar Novaes, Pianist Town Hall, Nov. 10, 3:00

Returning to the New York recital stage after a season's absence, Guiomar Novaes showed that she had lost none of her remarkable gifts as an interpreter. True to form, she played like an angel.

For an audience that filled Town Hall and overflowed onto the stage, the eminent Brazilian pianist performed Bach's Chromatic Fantasy and Fugue, Beethoven's Farewell Sonata, Chopin's B. minor Sonata, Brahms's B. flat minor Intermezzo and B. minor Capriccio, four excerpts from Villa-Lobos' Prole do Bêbê suites, and several encores.

Throughout the program the listener was constantly being persuaded that this was the way the music should sound, that the maximum amount of sensibility was conveyed within a perfectly proportioned framework and with the choicest tone quality and color. In lyric passages she never seemed to attack a phrase; rather, she let it unfold naturally and with the subtlest inflections. She often took slower tempos than are now customary in order to give the music space to breathe freely, yet there was never a hint of tedium or sentimentality. Fire and brilliance were achieved when suitable, without once sacrificing clarity. The tone was never anything but beautiful, even when she resorted to a forceful two-fingered attack to give a theme boldness. The rich smoothness of her legato was extraordinary and became doubly so when set against a staccato accompaniment that precluded the use of a damper pedal. Always the balances were impeccably maintained.

It was impossible to say that one work was better played than another; each of the standard pieces seemed freshly illuminated by her particular choice of tempos, phrasing, and coloration and by her remarkable sense of structure.

The Bach fantasy was romantically conceived, full of profound emotion, and throughout the elaborate figurations one could feel the unfaltering progression of the underlying harmonies, whether actually there or implied. In the Chopin sonata, almost rhapsodic in its improvisational quality, the opening of the Scherzo glittered, the slow-movement theme was sung with the noblest simplicity, and the concluding movement raced impetuously forward. In the two short Brahms works the pianist accomplished one miracle after another with her delicate, mercurial phrasing within a steady rhythmic pulse. The children's pieces by her countryman were, needless to say, completely captivating in their color, humor, and charm.

—R. E.

### Byzantine Singers Carnegie Recital Hall, Nov. 10

Christos Vronides directed, and sang with, the Byzantine Singers in a program that ranged from traditional Byzantine liturgical music to a



R. Dyer-Bennet    Guiomar Novaes

contemporary madrigal by Ray Green that calls for the singing of quarter tones. It included three American Indian melodies transcribed by Helen H. Roberts, the first performance of Henry Cowell's Evensong at Brookside, and several of Mr. Vronides' own compositions and arrangements.

—N. P.

### New Friends of Music Town Hall, Nov. 11, 5:30

The Albener Trio — Erich Itor Kahn, pianist; Giorgio Ciampi, violinist; and Benar Heifetz, cellist—played music by Beethoven for the second concert in the current season of the New Friends of Music. The program held the two Op. 70 trios—No. 1, in D, and No. 2, in E flat, and the Cello and Piano Sonata in C, Op. 102, No. 1. The performances of the afternoon were competent; the notes were there, and they were organized in conventional phrase patterns. The interpretations, however, were unimaginative, and the quality of sound was never very good. Mr. Kahn's loud piano playing forced the string players to sacrifice refinement for the sake of volume, so that their tones were generally rough. The entire concert left the impression that the performers could have made a better case for the music if they had listened to their own playing more carefully during rehearsals.

—A. H.

### Chloe Owen, Soprano Town Hall, Nov. 11 (Debut)

Chloe Owen, in her first New York recital, paid considerable attention to French music and also to American song in a commendably unhackneyed program. The soprano's singing gave an impression of experience and confidence. The tone quality was basically pleasing, and the vocal production generally fluent. Undue stress was suggested in the top notes of the effectively sung Handel aria at the beginning and also in those of Ned Rorem's expressively unconventional Alleluia at the close; here the bright and vigorous tones had a slight edge. Elsewhere she generally sang with vocal discretion and clarity; a few tones could have been more concentrated.

Her interpretations were often communicative and understanding; they proved capable both of emotional concentration and subtleties of mood, but occasionally seemed to miss some of the expressive point of certain songs, despite a prevailing impression of musicianship.

—F. D. P.

### Mercês Silva-Telles, Pianist Town Hall, Nov. 12

Mercês Silva-Telles had the pleasant idea of changing the customary order of works on her program. This was the young Brazilian pianist's second New York recital. She started off with Liszt's Funérailles and two Chopin mazurkas, continued with the first New York performance of Frank Amey's Sonatina (an exceedingly pianistic work, but second-hand Prokofiev in content), and closed the first half with Schumann's Fantasy in C major. After intermission came works by Schubert and Bach, and the second set of Brahms's Variations on a Theme by Paganini. Miss Silva-

Telles played with technical facility and generally sound musical instincts. While she had to push for tone with rather percussive results in the larger works, she showed herself capable of lyricism and poetry, particularly in slow passages. The Chopin mazurkas were especially charming in this regard.

—A. B.

### Cantata Singers Church of Heavenly Rest, Nov. 13

The Cantata Singers' first concert of the season was interesting from the musicological point of view in that it revealed the sources of some of the musical materials that went into J. S. Bach's Mass in B minor. He found them in four of his own cantatas, and these were the works that made up this program. Cantata No. 171, Gott wie dein Name, so ist auch dein Ruhm, supplied the music for the Patrem omnipotentem; No. 46, Schauet doch, und sehet, ob irgend ein Schmerz sei, did the same thing for the Qui tollis; No. 12, Weinen, Klagen, Sorgen, Zagen, offered the original version of the Crucifixus; and No. 120, Gott, man lobet dich in der Stille, provided that of the Et exspecto.

Arthur Mendel conducted his singers and a small orchestra in performances that did not often reach the level attained in previous concerts. The chorus was not balanced, the tone quality of the individual sections was not good, and the orchestra was out of tune and ragged in the first two cantatas. Belva Kibler, contralto, sang beautifully in Cantata No. 120, and both Charlotte Bloecher, soprano, and Paul Matthen, bass, performed competently much of the time, but William Hess, tenor, was in bad voice. Mr. Mendel got his forces sufficiently in order to turn in performances of the last two cantatas that were comfortable if not expert.

—A. H.

### Masashi Hashida, Violinist Town Hall, Nov. 13 (Debut)

Masashi Hashida, in his New York debut, revealed himself as a sincere and conscientious musician who paid careful attention to the markings of the scores in a program centered around Beethoven's Sonata in G major, Op. 30, No. 3, and Mendelssohn's Concerto in E minor. Such was the Japanese-American violinist's musical scrupulousness that hardly a staccato was ignored or a phrase less than clearly defined. Imprecise intonation, however, dulled the musical edge of his playing, and the underlying justness of his musical conception was hard put to it to assert itself in rapid passagework when the violinist's articulation was not clean enough to support his contentions. Leopold Mittman was the excellent accompanist.

—A. B.

### Maria Martino, Soprano Town Hall, Nov. 16 (Debut)

The finest attributes Maria Martino disclosed at her first New York recital were a rich, dark, dramatic soprano voice and unfailing pitch. The young singer had, too, fiery feeling, and all these qualities combined most effectively in La mamma morta, from Giordano's Andrea Chenier, Schubert's Aufenthalt, and Fauré's Fleur Jettée. The program also included Mozart's Or che il cielo a me ti rende, K. 374; three other Schubert lieder; Grieg's Haugtussa cycle; and a group in English.

Although Miss Martino tended towards dramatic exaggeration in most of her offerings, she demonstrated that she was also capable of refinement and restraint in the Grieg cycle, her major achievement of the evening; and Schubert's Vor meiner Wiege. The singer's vocal production was, however, uneven. While her warm middle tones offered her no difficulty, the higher notes were edgy

and rarely unstrained, and her breath control was not what one would have expected from a performer otherwise so accomplished.

—A. B.

### Earl Wild, Pianist Carnegie Hall, Nov. 16

Earl Wild's recital was distinguished by an excellent performance of Hindemith's Sonata No. 3 in a program that also offered the first United States performances of Buxtehude's Suite in D minor and the pianist's own transcription of Berlioz' Rakoczy March; Beethoven's Sonata in D major, Op. 10, No. 3; Franck's Prelude, Chorale, and Fugue; and three Ravel pieces. Mr. Wild brought a solid technique and an apparent musical perception to all of these works, and each one was played with an awareness of its stylistic demands. Not all of them were equally effective, however. The first two Beethoven movements were expertly delineated, as were the first two sections of the Franck composition, but the Minuetto in the Beethoven was plodding rather than bright, and the fourth movement emerged somewhat indifferently without due regard for its important structural position in the sonata. Mr. Wild's performance of the Franck fugue was not cohesive enough to hold the loosely strung episodes together. The Buxtehude suite is a pleasant collection of little pieces, and they were played delicately — almost too delicately, in fact, to project their varying natures throughout the reaches of Carnegie Hall.

—A. H.

### OTHER RECITALS

BEATRICE RIPPY, soprano; Carl Fischer Hall, Nov. 4.

GERTRUDE WROBLESKI, pianist; Town Hall, Nov. 8.

### Meyerowitz Opera Presented in Detroit

DETROIT. — Jan Meyerowitz' Eastward in Eden, an opera based on Dorothy Gardner's play about Emily Dickinson, was given its first performance at Wayne University on Nov. 16. It was sung by a cast of Detroit singers, drawn largely from the university. Virginia Person took the role of Miss Dickinson, and Amasa Tiffany was the Rev. Dr. Charles Wadsworth. Leonard Leone directed the production, and Valter Poole, associate conductor of the Detroit Symphony, led the student orchestra.

The composer was represented on Broadway in 1950 by another opera, The Barrier. His new work has a book prepared by Miss Gardner from her play, which ran briefly in New York during the 1947-48 season.

The opera had a second performance on Nov. 17.

### Springfield Season Opens under New Conductor

SPRINGFIELD, OHIO. — The Springfield Symphony began its ninth season on Nov. 4 in Memorial Hall, under the direction of a new conductor, Evan Whallon, who succeeded Guy Taylor, now conductor of the Nashville Symphony. In his first program Mr. Whallon conducted a concerto in D major by Handel, Louis Menzies' Arioso for Strings, Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, and Rachmaninoff's Second Piano Concerto, in which Byron Janis was the soloist. The Wittenberg A Cappella Choir and the Springfield Civic Chorus will be heard in two of the remaining three subscription concerts. Two pairs of youth concerts, a Lenten choral concert, and a spring Pop concert will also be presented by the orchestra.



## Arturo Toscanini Returns For Fifteenth NBC Season

By QUAINANCE EATON

THE return of Arturo Toscanini for his fifteenth season with the NBC Symphony, on Nov. 3, was a joint radio and television production, with cameras trained on the stage of Carnegie Hall, where the concerts are being given this season. The 84-year-old conductor, always a cynosure, was thus the chief attraction for three audiences—in the hall, on the radio network, and on the television screen. Because opportunities to observe Mr. Toscanini at close range are rare, I decided to watch the program on TV. I might almost as well have listened to the radio or gone to Carnegie Hall. For the camera work was so restless, so arbitrary, and aimless that one might have thought televising orchestras was in its dawn. Some lessons should have been learned from earlier experiments, and one of these surely is that the close-up is the only valuable shot after a locale has once been established. Another, in this particular case, is that close-ups of Mr. Toscanini were the only really interesting shots at all. We were seldom allowed to see him. Once focussed on him, the camera would jump away, without rhyme or reason, to wander over the backs of the orchestra players, up and down the front stands of violins, coming to rest inevitably and tiresomely on one particular fiddler. We were treated in meticulous and boring detail to views of the aisles between the players, cluttered up with stands and feet. Suddenly, the eye was jerked to a page of music, for no ascertainable reason, and as suddenly jerked away. In the effort to find the soloist or section who happened to be playing at the moment—a dodge that pleases for the first few times and then becomes automatic and repetitive—the peripatetic lens often reached its objective too early or too late, thereby showing us too many moments of noodling among the violins or idling in the winds. This technique cleared up towards the end of the hour, and we actually saw the tympanist at work in a salient passage, the basses working away valiantly at a pizzicato passage, and the horns blowing vigorously in a chorale. But it was too late to recapture the interest.

All this would seem to show that the video camera is not entirely happy just yet in the musical scene. Whether to "produce" or to be caught "static" is the question. Whether to feed, or over-feed, the eye or to leave the ear to work alone—the technicians cannot make up their minds. Add to this the misfortune of what must have been extremely awkward camera placement in Carnegie Hall and they had a problem not easy to solve. Until they go a little farther along the road to solution, however, it is hard to disagree with the plaintive statement of a lay music-lover who witnessed the same program.

"I just don't like symphony music on television," he mourned, and closed his eyes.

If the musical content of Mr. Toscanini's program has been neglected so far, it is because of the impression left with us in the television studio—that the music was being sacrificed to the camera. I heard it fitfully because of the visual distraction. It consisted of Weber's Overture to Euryanthe and Brahms's First Symphony. The broadcast

sounds seemed unusually shrill and not as well balanced as might have been.

Mr. Toscanini, as always, seemed grave, unsmiling, and intent. His entire concentration was on the music, and he wasted no time or energy on other matters. If some of the bounce and vigor were absent from his mien, his own illness, followed by the death of his wife, may be blamed. His musical vitality seemed unimpaired, however, and the imperious command was still there, drawing every ounce of effort from the orchestra. It seemed that in both the overture and the symphony he had broadened certain tempos. The ear and the memory can easily be deceived, but it would be interesting to compare these readings with his conducting of the two works ten years ago.

A half-hour TV showing of the Boston Symphony, on Nov. 9, placed in a spot made available by RCA-Victor, which will later use the time for a variety show, had many of the same camera faults—movement when it was not musically or visually apposite, lingering on unimportant elements in the orchestra, and too many meaningless long shots. Charles Munch had hardly recovered from an illness that had necessitated postponement of the program for a week (the Boston Pops under Arthur Fiedler filled in). He looked haggard (not all the effect of TV), and seemed self-conscious about the cameras in the one work he conducted—Ravel's Rapsodie Espagnole. Richard Burgin, assistant conductor, led the first work, Beethoven's Egmont Overture. Ben Grauer was commentator on both shows.

While there is every reason to be grateful to NBC for being willing to experiment and to give its sustaining time to music, these two programs showed too little consideration for the artistic values of both music and television. They gave the impression of confusion, lack of direction, and the utmost haste in preparation. It is forgivable, if not exactly conducive to illusion, to hear a technician's voice in the middle of a musical work, asking frantically for a screw-driver to be sent up to Camera One. Slips usually don't count in this new medium. But some thought must be taken about artistic direction and purpose or NBC will defeat its own ideals.

### Court Ruling On Recordings Upheld

Last year's decision by the New York State Supreme Court that the Metropolitan Opera Association has property rights in the performances it broadcasts was unanimously upheld by the court's Appellate Division, First Department, in a ruling made on Nov. 7.

The Wagner-Nichols Recorder Corporation had been enjoined on Oct. 18, 1950, from recording advertising, selling, or distributing Metropolitan Opera broadcasts, after suit had been brought jointly by the opera company; the American Broadcasting Company, which broadcasts the company's performances; and Columbia Records, which makes and sells recordings of Metropolitan opera versions. The Appellate Division held that "defendants' acts, as alleged in the complaint,

constitute a misappropriation of the work, skill, expenditure and good-will of the plaintiffs, and present a case of unfair competition."

### Group Puts On Tchaikovsky's Mazeppa

Tchaikovsky's *Mazeppa*, an opera seldom staged and little admired, was given an evening's reprieve from obscurity when it was put on in Carnegie Hall on Nov. 6 by an organization calling itself the Opera Association of New York. Thanks partly to the limitations of the score and partly to the inadequacy of its presentation, the performance accomplished little toward enhancing the reputation of this lesser effort by the composer of *Eugen Onegin* and *Pique Dame*.

The seventh of Tchaikovsky's ten operas, *Mazeppa* was completed in 1883—five years after *Eugen Onegin*—and performed simultaneously in Moscow and St. Petersburg that same year. It was not a popular success, nor has it been one in any subsequent production. The libretto, based on Pushkin's poem *Poltava*, is a static, episodic affair, with lacunae that make the logic and motivations of the action difficult to follow. Much of the opera consists of excessively long solo scenes and rather redundant duets, and the feeling of forward movement is seldom present. The music contains much that is lyric and impassioned, but the quality of the melodic invention is generally much inferior to that of *Eugen Onegin*, and a prevailing laxness of formal construction robs the score of the succinctness and energy that make *Pique Dame* so compelling a dramatic piece. There are many effective moments, but hardly any totally effective scenes or acts.

Under the timid and languorous baton of Michael Fieveisky, the music

scarcely ever came to life; and the staging was distinctly less than professional. The cast included Inge Laure, Tamara Bering, Ivan Hosh, L. Rejnarowych, Mykola Czaly, Ivan Samokish, and A. Wesley-Vasilias-kas. The language used was said to be Ukrainian.

—C. S.

### Metropolitan Fund Campaign Reaches Goal

Contributions from 76,523 sources in the United States and abroad have helped the Metropolitan Opera Fund of 1951-52 reach its goal of \$750,000. The fund was organized last December under the chairmanship of George A. Sloan, also chairman of the Metropolitan Opera Association board of directors, to meet maintenance needs for the 1950-51 season and to provide essential production improvements for the 1951-52 season. The total sum received was \$750,112.

Mr. Sloan attributed the success of the campaign "primarily to the magnificent support of our New York subscribers and other friends of opera throughout the nation and in other countries." Gifts came from 62,020 radio listeners in the 48 states, from 1,558 Canadians, and from 188 additional contributors in Hawaii, Alaska, Panama, India, England, Portugal, Peru, and France.

A large percentage of the gifts from radio listeners came as a response to the Radio Jamboree held on March 24. Other important sources of income were the National Committee, which represented many states; the Women's Committee in New York City; the Down Town Men's Committee in New York; the Metropolitan Opera Guild; the benefit ball aboard the S. S. Independence; the benefit performance of *Fledermaus* at the opera house on Feb. 22; corporations; and foundations.

## MUSICAL COMEDY IN AMERICA

by CECIL SMITH  
Editor of *MUSICAL AMERICA*

Reviewed by  
OSCAR HAMMERSTEIN 2d  
in the  
New York Herald Tribune  
Book Review  
January 28, 1951

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# ORCHESTRAS

(Continued from page 12)

Vaughan Williams, I should say, than from any other single source. It is a latter-day Fantasia on a Theme of Thomas Tallis, employing a fairly strictly diatonic scheme of harmony (although with a free movement of clashing, simultaneous tonal planes such as is found only in later Vaughan Williams works) to express two moods—one "dark" and one "bright"—that are intended to be "all American" in the patterns of their materials. There is much to admire in the sonorous and coloristic imaginativeness of the concerto, but it suffers from rhythmic inanition and a considerable monotony in the means of delivery.

The Strauss songs, presented with orchestra for the first time in New York, are affecting latter-day mementos of Ariadne auf Naxos and Arabella. They are not intended, I gather from the musical context, for so heroic a voice as Miss Farrell's, but she sang them with sumptuous tone. The Weber scene she hurled forth with supreme aplomb. At no time, however, did she articulate the words clearly, or seem to be interested in what they might mean.

—C. S.

## Mitropoulos Conducts Work by Charles Mills

New York Philharmonic-Symphony. Dimitri Mitropoulos, conductor. Gina Bachauer, pianist. Carnegie Hall, Nov. 8, 9, and 11.

Overture to La Scala di Seta. . . . Rossini  
Symphony, No. 104, D major. . . . Haydn  
Theme and Variations, Op. 81. . . . Charles Mills  
(First performance)  
Piano Concerto, No. 3, D minor  
. . . . . Rachmaninoff

Charles Mills's Theme and Variations was commissioned by Dimitri Mitropoulos. The composer's comment on the structural aspects of his music, quoted in Herbert F. Peyser's program note, stated that "the work as a whole (theme, ten variations, and fugue finale) is tightly integrated, creating more the effect of a large monothematic piece than the more usual episodic indentations of form. The theme is treated as a kind of ostinato and the variations are melodic, contrapuntal, and rhythmic rather than harmonic in character." This description seemed accurate, except that the music did not sound as tightly integrated in performance as the composer's comment would indicate, possibly because his devices of variation did not come off effectively. The harmonic texture is mildly dissonant but always lucid; the scoring is over-heavy; the thematic material commonplace but suited to variation purposes. For all the obvious technical labor involved in this score, it sounded turgid, static, and rhetorically hollow. The harmonic flavor is curiously old-fashioned, and the piece has the top-heavy effect of such neo-classic misadventures as Reger's weaker scores, although it is not on their level of workmanship.

Gina Bachauer's interpretation of Rachmaninoff's Third Piano Concerto was both original and musically distinguished. Instead of smashing through the first movement as most pianists do, she kept it subdued and introspective, broadening her accents and dynamics in the slow movement, and saving her thunderbolts for the finale. In this way she made the concerto a gigantic crescendo of sonority and intensity and was physically



Gina Bachauer

Thor Johnson

able to encompass the final pages without any signs of strain. Her tone was always lustrous, even in the savage chords of the last movement, where a judicious use of weight touch enabled her to pierce through the orchestral accompaniment without her tone becoming harsh and percussive. In a few places in the finale she let her excitement run away with her, but in general her performance was well integrated with that of the orchestra, and Mr. Mitropoulos gave her a sensitively adjusted accompaniment that was highly eloquent in its own right. All in all, this was one of the most musically persuasive interpretations of the work that I have heard since Rachmaninoff's death.

Mr. Mitropoulos conducted the Haydn Symphony in a coarse, heavy-handed, melodramatic way. The result was fascinating, because it was tough enough to take such treatment and survive, although it sounded like a sort of overblown nineteenth-century work with eighteenth-century overtones. The Rossini overture, on the other hand, was deftly played. Both Mr. Mills and Miss Bachauer took repeated bows with Mr. Mitropoulos.

—R. S.

## Varga Plays Concerto For Philharmonic Members

Laszlo Varga, successor of Leonard Rose as first cellist of the New York Philharmonic-Symphony, made his first solo appearance with the orchestra in a members' concert given in the ballroom of the Hotel Plaza on Nov. 12. He and Dimitri Mitropoulos collaborated closely and effectively in a highly rhapsodic interpretation of Boccherini's Cello Concerto in B flat. Mr. Varga played skillfully and assuredly, with a refined tone that was well adjusted to the proportions of the small hall. His intonation faltered only in a few passages that called for virtuosic fingerwork in high positions. Mr. Mitropoulos led the reduced orchestra in unusually ingratiating performances of the Overture to Wolf-Ferrari's The Secret of Suzanne; Haydn's Symphony No. 80, in D minor; and Caplet's orchestral version of Debussy's Children's Corner.

—A. H.

## Barzin Introduces Two New Compositions

National Orchestral Association. Leon Barzin, conductor. Bela Urban, violinist. Carnegie Hall, Nov. 12:

Suite No. 2, B minor. . . . . Bach  
Violin Concerto (1939). . . . . Isadore Freed  
(First time in New York)  
Sinfonia No. 5. . . . . Vittorio Rieti  
(First time in New York)  
Finlandia. . . . . Sibelius

For the opening program of the National Orchestral Association's 22nd season Leon Barzin had provided two novelties. Isadore Freed's Violin Concerto is an unpretentious, unproblematic work, most notable for its clever scoring. At times the composer submerges the solo instrument, but he achieves some haunting colors and tonal contrasts. The concerto is too loose and episodic in structure to achieve cogent form. Bela Urban played the solo part fervently, if not always with impeccable intonation. He made the music sound emotionally convincing and did everything he

could to give it a continuous line. The orchestra played the accompaniment a bit sketchily.

In contrast to the introspective and lyrical character of the Freed concerto, Rieti's Sinfonia was brash, brittle, and witty in an extrovert way. The contrapuntal ingenuity displayed in the third and final movement, as well as the subtle harmony of the Andante reveal the composer's extraordinary technical skill. Mr. Barzin and his musicians obviously enjoyed the music keenly.

Neither the Bach Suite nor the Sibelius tone poem was well played. Mr. Barzin conducted them roughly and carelessly, and he leaped into the air during the performance of Finlandia in a manner more suitable to a jack-in-the-box than a conductor. The three flutists used in the Bach Suite played with considerably more attempt at sensible phrasing and musical emphasis than the orchestra. They were Thomas Benton, Byron Goode, and Mildred Northrop. Altogether, this was an evening of slipshod, if vigorous, performances. Mr. Barzin should set higher standards for his training orchestra.

—R. S.

## Schuman Symphony No. 6 Has New York Premiere

Philadelphia Orchestra. Eugene Ormandy, conductor. Alexander Brailowsky, pianist. Carnegie Hall, Nov. 13:

Organ Concerto, D major. . . . . Handel  
(Transcribed by Eugene Ormandy)  
Piano Concerto No. 1, E minor. . . . . Chopin  
Symphony No. 6 (In one movement) . . . . . William Schuman  
(First time in New York)  
Piano Concerto No. 2, A major. . . . . Liszt

William Schuman's Symphony No. 6 might well be called a requiem for the twentieth century. It is grim music, terrifying in its psychological implications, relentless as a Greek tragedy, and irresistibly logical in its development. Its form is extraordinarily compact; the six sections are marked as follows: Largo; Moderato con moto; Leggieramente; Adagio; Allegro risoluto, presto; and Larghissimo. All of them evolve from a unified train of thought, although they are not variations in the traditional sense. The symphony opens with a magnificent threnody, sung by the strings and punctuated by fascinating figures in the winds and brasses. Then the pace quickens, and a restless syncopation disturbs the solemnity of the introduction. This is distilled in the third section into almost pure rhythm. Once again, the dark, elegiac mood of the opening is revived, only to turn into a savage outburst, in which frenetic passion is controlled by iron logic. The final section is one of the supremely tragic moments in modern music. At its close, Hamlet's words, "The rest is silence," seem the only appropriate description for the mood of stilled anguish and serenity born of compassion that it evokes.

In his Symphony No. 6 Schuman has succeeded in blending the dramatic power of such dance scores as Under the Night Journey, and Judith with the lucid style and texture of such works as his Third and Fourth Symphonies. In his earlier works (notably the Third Symphony) he has composed at times with a sort of cold, intellectual ferocity. But in this most recent symphony intellectual brilliance and logic are fused with imagination and emotion. The fugue texture of the second section, the subtle use of polytonality, the bold scoring of the work—all bear witness to a master of his craft. Mr. Ormandy conducted the work with complete devotion, and the performance left nothing to be desired either in sonorous impact or consistency of style. The composer acknowledged the somewhat stunned applause of the audience. This symphony is a deeply disturbing work of art, like Picasso's Guernica or Martha Graham's Herodias. It either stirs the listener to the depths or moves him not at all.

The orchestra played Mr. Or-



Lukas Foss

Alexander Brailowsky

mandy's Handel transcription lustily. Mr. Brailowsky was at his best in the Liszt concerto, which he performed with an unflinching sense of its bravura and its most telling moments for display. In the Chopin concerto he seemed somewhat brittle and matter-of-fact. He, too, was recalled by the audience several times.

It was a cruel thrust at Liszt for Mr. Ormandy to put one of his seediest works, the A major Concerto, immediately after a first-rate contemporary symphony on the program. It showed up the fustian and harmonically feeble bombast of the concerto as cruelly as the clear light of day reveals the threadbare upholstery and cracked gilt of some relic of a nineteenth-century mansion.

—R. S.

## Munch Pays Tribute To Serge Koussevitzky

Boston Symphony. Charles Munch, conductor. Carnegie Hall, Nov. 14:

Masonic Funeral Music, K. 477. . . . . Mozart  
Symphony No. 5. . . . . Honegger  
Symphony No. 6. . . . . Tchaikovsky

This concert, which opened the Boston Symphony's 66th season in New York, was the first one presented here by the orchestra since the death of Serge Koussevitzky on June 4. The program was dedicated to his memory, and Mr. Munch asked the audience to stand for a moment in silent tribute at the close of the performance of Mozart's Masonic Funeral Music.

It was immediately apparent that the orchestra was in excellent shape, technically, and the performances of the Honegger and Tchaikovsky symphonies left little to be desired in accuracy of attack, tonal balance, and suppleness of phrasing. But the concert was prevalently dull, lacking in the electric inspiration and intensity of conception that were outstanding traits of Koussevitzky and that Mr. Munch has revealed more than once in times past. Arthur Honegger's Fifth Symphony, commissioned by the Koussevitzky Music Foundation, is a dignified, well-wrought, but perfunctory work. It did not seem vital at its first performance here, and rehearing only emphasizes its plodding nature. Nor did Mr. Munch's interpretation of Tchaikovsky's Pathétique carry conviction, for all its virtuosity and tonal opulence. It was theatrically effective, but it sounded too carefully planned to be heartfelt. This work, quite understandably, did not appear to be congenial to Mr. Munch's temperament.

—R. S.

## Foss Piano Concerto Given New York Premiere

Boston Symphony. Charles Munch, conductor. Lukas Foss, pianist. Carnegie Hall, Nov. 17, 2:30:

Overture, Leonore, No. 3. . . . . Beethoven  
Piano Concerto No. 2. . . . . Foss  
(First time in New York)  
Symphony No. 4, E minor. . . . . Brahms

With suitable regard for the theatrical tradition that the show must go on, Charles Munch conducted the Boston Symphony's first matinee program of the season despite a feverish attack of the gripe which sent him to bed as soon as the concert was

(Continued on page 23)

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## Two Opera Seasons

### Under Way in Philadelphia

THE Philadelphia Orchestra's second program of the season was given at the Academy of Music on Oct. 12 and 13. Eugene Ormandy conducted a glowing performance of Strauss's *Ein Heldenleben*, in which Jacob Krachmalnick, the new concertmaster, played his long solo in the third section with great smoothness and beauty of one. Mr. Ormandy's thrice-familiar reading of the Brahms C minor Symphony and his vital account of Beethoven's Overture to *Coriolanus* completed the program.

On Oct. 19 and 20, an all-Beethoven program offered symphonic staples for the third successive week. Excellent performances of the Fifth Symphony and Sixth Symphony were heard. The playing of the latter was notable for much shading and desirable exposition of detail. The afternoon opened with *Die Geschöpfe des Prometheus*.

Dimitri Mitropoulos and the New York Philharmonic-Symphony were heard at the Academy of Music on Oct. 16. The Greek conductor presented Rachmaninoff's Second Symphony as the major work of the program. Music obviously congenial to him, he gave it a memorable performance. Michael Rabin, fifteen-year-old violinist, was the soloist, playing the Paganini D major Concerto with remarkable aplomb and command of his instrument. The Overture to Mozart's *The Abduction from the Seraglio*

served as a sprightly springboard for the concert.

Opera's opening gun was fired at the Academy of Music on Oct. 18, when the Philadelphia Civic Grand Opera Company gave a very mediocre and lackluster performance of *Rigoletto*. Cesare Bardelli, in the title role, sang under pitch much of the time, and Graciela Rivera, as Gilda, spoiled the fine effect her Caro nome had made with a forced and unlovely attempt at the backstage E in *al-tis-simo*, which Verdi never wrote anyway. Otherwise, the soprano was quite charming, although her portrayal was on a small scale. Eugene Conley was a manly, straightforward Duke, having to his credit the most consistent good vocalism of the evening. John Lawler and Elinor Warren were Sparafucile and Maddalena. Giuseppe Bamboschek conducted with authority, but the scenery and stage direction seemed very old-fashioned.

On Oct. 22 the Philadelphia-La Scala Opera Company opened its local season with an attractive account of Rossini's *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*. Gino Bechi, new to this city, was in capital voice and mood as Figaro. Beautiful high notes and many individual touches distinguished his performance, when he did not exaggerate the comedy. Hilde Reggiani, probably the most full-throated coloratura in America today, was in excellent voice as Rosina, singing Proch's *Variations* with a Tetrazzini-like brilliance in the

lesson scene. Bruno Landi has sung better here, but he is a practised Al-maviva. Victor Tatzos and Lloyd Harris were Basilio and Bartolo, and Carlo Moresco conducted with finesse. New scenery for the final two acts proved a welcome and unusual sight at the Academy of Music.

Two days previous to the La Scala opening, S. Hurok brought his production of *Fledermaus* to Philadelphia, invading the venerable Academy of Music with a performance that savored of Broadway and in which much of the Viennese spirit was obliterated. Irra Petina was the Rosalinda, but gave the feeling that she would be happier cast as Orlofsky—a role sung with little effect by Earl Redding, baritone. Michael Bartlett and Lloyd Thomas Leech worked with a will as Eisenstein and Alfred, and Adelaide Bishop was a sprightly Adele. Vigor and energy were far more in evidence than charm or finesse. Michael Kuttner conducted.

Recitals have been slow in getting under way. Fernando Germani, organist of St. Peter's in Rome, presented a program in the First Presbyterian Church on Oct. 3. Martial Singher gave a lecture-recital on the roles in Mozart's operas, stressing the fact that opera is first and foremost theatre, at the Philadelphia Music Academy on Oct. 4. On Oct. 24, Ruth St. Denis displayed some of her old magic in a lecture-recital at the Plays & Players organization. John Langstaff, baritone, was heard at Ethical Society Auditorium on Oct. 29. A versatile and intelligent artist, his seriousness of purpose was well emphasized in a long program. Solomon, playing with superb artistry, gave his first Philadelphia recital at the Academy of Music on Oct. 31.

—MAX DE SCHAUENSEE

### Manchester Opens Rebuilt Concert Hall

MANCHESTER. — The Free Trade Hall, erected here in 1856, destroyed in a bombing raid in 1940, and now rebuilt, was opened with a nine-concert festival that lasted from Nov. 17 to 25. Although it is an all-purpose building, it will serve principally to house the Hallé Orchestra concerts.

The festival, largely orchestral, included programs by the Hallé Orchestra, Sir John Barbirolli, conductor; the Hamburg Radio Symphony, Hans Schmidt-Isserstedt, conductor; the Amsterdam Concertgebouw Orchestra, Eduard van Beinum, conductor; and the BBC Symphony, Sir Malcolm Sargent, conductor.

Leonard Howitt was the architect and Hope Bagenal the acoustics expert for the task of rebuilding the landmark. Almost £500,000 was spent on the transformation. The Renaissance façade of the original building was retained in the design. The main auditorium seats 2,600, and the acoustics are reported to be among the best in an English concert hall. A small auditorium, suitable for chamber-music programs, seats 450.

Among the other assets of the new building are orchestra and choir assembly rooms, a suite for the conductor, accommodations for solo artists, and an elevator for bringing the solo piano on stage. Loud speakers carry the tuning note from an electronic tuning fork into the soloists' rooms. The main floor of the large auditorium has so slight a slope that, according to the architect, "a bowl of soup would not spill on it."

### Haydn Opera Staged in London

LONDON.—Two performances of Haydn's *Il Mondo della Luna* were given by the London Opera Club on Nov. 8 and 10. Given in an English version by Ernest Urbach and Douglas Craig, it was conducted by John Pritchard. In the cast were Ian Wallace, Alexander Young, Roderick Jones, Raymond Nilsson, Gwyneth Owen, and Margaret Kilbey.

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## San Francisco Opera Gives Los Angeles Season

THE fourteen performances of the San Francisco Opera Company's fifteenth annual season in Shrine Auditorium in Los Angeles netted a comfortable gross of \$225,000. There were five sold-out houses—the theatre seats more than 6,000—and the total attendance for the season was 68,000. Otello and Fidelio drew the smallest audiences.

Artistically it was generally conceded that the company was at its most brilliant in the Tosca given on Oct. 31, which brought Dorothy Kirsten's first appearance here in the title role and her third anywhere. The soprano's conception of Tosca stressed less her regal imperiousness than her fundamental femininity; this was a Tosca of fiery jealousy and unconcealed possessiveness for her lover—an approach Miss Kirsten carried through with a sustained intensity that was completely absorbing. Vocally the singer was equal to the demands of the part, and the Vissi d'arte won her a long ovation for the simplicity and sincerity with which it was sung.

As Scarpia, Robert Weede not only stood up dramatically to this compelling Tosca but made more of the vocal opportunities than any baritone heard here in years. Jan Peerce was in especially fine voice as Cavaradossi, and Salvatore Baccaloni as the Sacristan and Alessio de Paolis as Spolelta contributed importantly to a finely integrated ensemble. Fausto Cleve conducted with mastery, and both chorus and orchestra gave evidence of the inspirational quality that pervaded the entire performance.

The season opened on Oct. 23 before a house that had long been sold out to hear Lily Pons sing her first Violetta in La Traviata here. Since her debut in the role in San Francisco she has notably improved her portrayal—the voice was firmer and fuller, the coloratura considerably more accurate, and the impersonation much freer, although there was still rather too much cold calculation apparent in it. Mr. Peerce was a satisfactory Alfredo and Mr. Weede an uncommonly forceful Germont. For this performance Gaetano Merola made his only appearance of the season in the conductor's stand, as usual permitting the singers plenty of flexibility.

Next to Miss Kirsten's Tosca, the outstanding individual triumph of the season was that of Nicola Rossi-Lemeni in the title role of Boris Godounoff on Oct. 24. His performance was quite as spectacular as it had been in San Francisco, and he was received by the Los Angeles public with equal fervor. Blanche Thebom sang a Marina that was full-voiced and had more dramatic conviction than the role usually is given. Mr. Baccaloni's Varlaam was one of his most complete characterizations, and Mr. De Paolis' Schouisky made an effective foil to Mr. Rossi-Lemeni's Czar. Walter Fredericks sang Dimitri tolerably well, making nothing of the character dramatically, and Désiré Ligeti was an excellent Rangoni. The indifferent staging and lighting of Armando Agnini and the inadequacy of some of the other singers kept the performance as a whole below the standard set by the principals.

Fidelio was given its supposedly first professional performance here on Oct. 25. Astrid Varnay sang the role of Leonore without much conviction, al-

though with adequate vocal resources, and Set Svanholm had no difficulty with the vocal tasks of Florestan. These factors, plus the prettily sung Marzelline of Uta Graf, the youthful Jacquino of James Schwabacher, the finely sympathetic Rocco of Dezzo Ernster, and the gruff Don Pizarro of Herbert Janssen, failed to jell into a convincing performance—one of the least successful given by the company. Alfred Wallenstein made his first appearance here as an operatic conductor on this occasion, but despite his familiarity with the score—he conducted it from memory—there were insecure episodes both on the stage and in the orchestra.

La Bohème, on Oct. 26, was thoroughly delightful. It gave Mr. Rossi-Lemeni a chance to prove himself in quite another type of role, that of Colline, which he handled with fine comic inventiveness. Vocally he was impressive throughout. Ralph Herbert was new here as Marcello, bringing some novel touches to his portrayal. Mr. Bjoerling's voice was at its smoothest and most lyrical as Rodolfo, and Bidu Sayao invested Mimi with her customary charm. Lois Hartzell was a shrill Musetta. Paul Breisch conducted.

La Forza del Destino, given on the afternoon of Oct. 27, proved one of those rare occasions when everyone seemed to be in top form and everything came off as planned. Herva Nelli sang Leonora with exquisite variety of effect, lacking nothing in either power or delicacy. Mr. Peerce and Mr. Weede as Don Alvaro and Don Carlo were both in exceptionally fine voice. Mr. Rossi-Lemeni intoned the Abbott's music with a repressed intensity that contributed to a strong characterization. Claramae Turner's Preziosilla was a dashing conception, sung with both power and vivacity. Mr. Baccaloni for once did not overdo the buffo aspects of Fra Melitone, and Lorenzo Alvaro's brief scene as the Marquis profited from his dramatic and vocal skill. Kurt Herbert Adler conducted with expertly controlled enthusiasm, and the chorus, which he trains, again distinguished itself by first-class work.

Dorothy Kirsten gave a striking performance in Madame Butterfly on the night of Oct. 27. Her Cio-Cio-San was sung with both power and tenderness and acted with rare realism. Unfortunately, execrable lighting kept the second and third acts so dark the performers' countenances could not be clearly distinguished. In an uneven cast, Eugene Conley sang fairly handsomely as Pinkerton; Alice Ostrowsky conceived Suzuki in soubrettish terms; Francesco Valentino was a negative Sharpless; Mr. De Paolis offered his usual expert Goro; and Yi-Kwei Sze characterized the Bonze differently enough to arouse interest.

In Parsifal, presented on the afternoon of Oct. 28, Set Svanholm assumed the title role with authority, but with rather less than a convincing degree of mysticism in the later scenes. Astrid Varnay, the Kundry, was vocally at her best. Herbert Janssen sang with an inflexibility that lessened the eloquence of the role, and Dezzo Ernster was superb in dignity, voice, and authority as Gurnemanz. Erich Leinsdorf's masterly conducting made the orchestral playing the most rewarding element of the afternoon.

Mr. Bjoerling fairly surpassed himself as Romeo and Bidu Sayao offered a charming account of Juliet in a performance of Gounod's opera on Oct. 29. Nicola Moscona was the Friar and James Schwabacher the Tybalt.

Der Rosenkavalier, on Oct. 30, was a mixed blessing. It was good to hear the luscious score so ably set forth by Mr. Leinsdorf, but the sugar-candy settings and less than ideal impersonations of the leading roles mitigated the listener's enjoyment of the opera. Stella Roman was the Marschallin, singing and acting some of the role persuasively, particularly at the close of the first act. Miss Thebom's Octavian was handsome, brash, and a bit overdone; Miss Graf's Sophie was nicely sung, but a little too sophisticated. Mr. Alvaro toned down the boorishness of Ochs without achieving an ideal characterization. Ralph Herbert was an excellent Faninal, Ernest Lawrence a tolerable Italian singer, and Mr. De Paolis and Herta Glaz entirely satisfactory as the intrigantes.

—ALBERT GOLDBERG

## Symphony Begins New Orleans Season

NEW ORLEANS.—The New Orleans Symphony's first concert of the season was given on Nov. 6. Massimo Freccia conducted a program that included Beethoven's Egmont Overture, Berlioz' Symphonie Fantastique, a Prokofiev suite, and Siegfried's Rhine Journey from Wagner's Götterdämmerung. The orchestra played with a smoothness usually manifested only much later in the season. There was a new concertmaster in the person of Harry Cykman.

During Mr. Freccia's absence, when he will conduct in San Francisco, his place will be occupied by Artur Rodzinski, Alexander Hilsberg, and Izler Solomon.

There will be fifteen subscription concerts, fifteen youth concerts, three junior programs, and three department of recreation Pop concerts. Soloists for the subscription series are Aldo Ciccolini, Jascha Heifetz, Gina Bachauer, Gyorgy Sandor, Harry Cykman, Artur Rubinstein, Rudolf Serkin, Issac Stern, and Nan Merri-man.

Alfredo Wang, violinist, gave scholarly and impressive interpretations in his recital on Nov. 3, presented by the Sisterhood of the Gates of Prayer. He was accompanied by Peter Paul Fuchs.

—HARRY B. LOEB

## Oklahoma City Loses Home Theatre

OKLAHOMA CITY.—The Home Theatre, a fine auditorium seating 1,800, has been closed and transformed into an office building. Musical organizations such as touring opera and ballet companies that used to appear there will henceforth be seen in the Municipal Auditorium, which seats 6,500.

The Chamber Music Society of Oklahoma City, now in its third year, is made up of members of the Oklahoma City Symphony and has a supporting group of patrons of about 300. Four visiting chamber groups will also be heard in or near Oklahoma City this season.

The Junior Symphony of Oklahoma City gave its first performance of the season in the Classen High School Auditorium on Nov. 19. The group is backed by the Junior Chamber of Commerce with a \$3,000 budget and a sustaining membership of 800 patrons. In the past two years it has made excellent strides and has placed two members in the senior symphonic group. Eric Parham, Louis May, and Tracy Silvester are co-conductors of the junior symphony, which gives four local concerts a year and plays numerous out-of-town engagements.

—TRACY SILVESTER



# OPERA AT CITY CENTER

THE fall season of the New York City Opera Company ended at the City Center on Nov. 11 with a sluggish performance of Mozart's Don Giovanni, in which Willabelle Underwood made her New York operatic debut in the role of Donna Anna. Miss Underwood's performance was carefully prepared and often musical; but her light voice was overtaxed much of the time, and her singing lacked impact. An equally half-hearted performance of Puccini's La Bohème was offered at the matinee on Nov. 11, with Wesley Dalton, in his second assignment with the company, a vocally and theatrically inadequate Rodolfo.

Two young singers made their first appearances with the company on Nov. 2 in Leoncavallo's Pagliacci (coupled, as always at the City Center, with Mascagni's Cavalleria Rusticana). Alice Richmond, as Nedda, revealed a lyric voice of good substance but imperfect discipline, and she engaged more in elaborate choreography than in apposite characterization and dramatic movement. Mario Lalli, the possessor of a small, intrinsically flexible tenor voice, was a tentative Beppe. In the same performance Mac Morgan sang Silvio for the first time with the company, negotiating the music smoothly and indicating considerable understanding of the action of the part.

Ellen Faull as Cio-Cio-San, David Poleri as Pinkerton, Eunice Alberts as Suzuki, and Mr. Lalli as Goro all sang their parts for the first time at the City Center in the performance of Puccini's Madama Butterfly on Nov. 10. Miss Faull's singing was grateful in its dependable musicianship and feeling for lyric line, but she failed to communicate much of the youthfulness and naïveté of the character. Mr. Poleri, though not always completely certain about his music was an entirely believable Pinkerton, and his voice was free and resonant. Miss Alberts was a workmanlike but unduly sobersided Su-

zuki. Mr. Lalli's Goro seemed experimental.

Several other singers undertook new tasks in the closing fortnight of the season. Wilma Spence replaced Patricia Neway as Leah in David Tamkin's The Dybbuk on Nov. 5. Raffaele Arie sang the elder Des Grieux in Massenet's Manon for the first time with the company on Nov. 7. Michael Pollock appeared as Don Basilio in Mozart's The Marriage of Figaro for the first time on Nov. 4. Ethel Greene was a new Annina in Verdi's La Traviata on Nov. 3.

After the conclusion of the New York season, the company moved into the Middle West, to give performances in Detroit, Chicago, Bloomington, Ind., and East Lansing, Mich.

—CECIL SMITH

## ORCHESTRAS

(Continued from page 20)

over. No doubt Richard Burgin, the orchestra's associate conductor, could have taken over the Beethoven overture and the Brahms symphony to good effect; but Lukas Foss, now a scholarship-holder at the American Academy in Rome, had made a special trip from Italy to take part with Mr. Munch in the first American presentations, in Boston and New York, of the piano concerto he wrote at the academy last year. And certainly no one who had not been told could have guessed that Mr. Munch was ill, for the performance of the concerto was superlative in every detail, and his conducting of it constituted one of his best achievements since he took over the orchestra and one of his most successful services to American music.

Not that the concerto is a full-blown masterpiece. More than anything else, it is a chapter from the musical biography of a young composer in search of his own style, his own substance. In outward presentation the music is striking, for Foss understands the piano, being a notable pianist himself, and writes with enormous idiomatic command of the instrument. But both the content and the structure of the music are unsure. At their most questionable the materials are so derivative from Stravinsky, Copland, and Bartók that it is not difficult to identify the very pieces and passages from which they were appropriated, whether consciously or unconsciously. At their best, they are marked by a very per-

sonal ambivalence between an angrily joyous syncopated Americanism and a nostalgic sentiment suggesting the now vanished Central European musical expression that surrounded Foss in the early years of his life, before he came to this country. Of the three movements, the first speaks with the largest degree of individual conviction and approaches closest to structural solidarity.

Clearly Foss has given earnest thought to the role of the solo instrument in a modern orchestra-cum-piano work, for his solution of this problem is the most successful feature of the concerto. He has turned his back on the concerto grosso and concertino styles, in which the piano is demoted to a position not greatly different from that of the rest of the orchestral instruments. This concerto is frankly a bravura work; but it is not, like the classic and standard romantic concertos, essentially a dialogue between the piano and the orchestra. The piano is part of the orchestral totality, but its duties are more prominent and technically more exhibitionistic than in most contemporary works of this kind. Though the piano figurations are mostly either percussively chordal or elaborated out of tricky gruppetti (of which the piano writing in Stravinsky's Petrouchka may be taken as the archetype), the piano part always sounds, and the piece is an enormously grateful vehicle for any pianist who, as Mr. Foss did, has the inexhaustible technique and iron rhythmic control to play it.

—C. S.

### Toscanini Conducts Beethoven and Prokofiev Works

Arturo Toscanini's second broadcast concert of the season with the NBC Symphony, on Nov. 10, was great when he was dealing with the grandeur of Beethoven's Seventh Symphony, but it was something less when he espoused the cause of Prokofiev's Classical Symphony. It may be that he does not really appreciate this vivacious and witty twentieth-century classical essay, or perhaps he just could not get into the spirit of it on this occasion; whatever the reason, his interpretation revealed little of the sly humor the work contains. Furthermore, the orchestra, which customarily plays faultlessly under his direction, missed a few notes.

Berlioz' Queen Mab Scherzo, which rounded out the program, is a tour de force from the standpoint of orchestration, and Mr. Toscanini saw to it that every jot of color was produced in the proper way at the proper time. He did not, however, manage to organize its parts into a perfect whole as he has done in times past.

—A. H.

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## New Aida

(Continued from page 4)

the stage director are said to have had. But her reason was evidently a different one than this, if one may draw the natural inferences from her handling of scenes in which the stage investiture was more appropriate to the purposes of the plot.

At the very outset of the opera Miss Webster, I thought, tipped her hand. The libretto of *Aida* begins in medias res, part way through a conversation Ramfis and Radames have obviously begun before the curtain rises. In Miss Webster's production Ramfis, who had just entered briskly, followed by Radames, turns away from him to sing his opening remarks (Si: corre voce che l'Etiopie, etc.), which are obviously conversational and quasi-confidential, to Mr. Cleve and the house. Later on, in the judgment scene, Radames and Amneris sing their entire exchange straight out into the house without looking at each other. And so it goes, time after time; the relationships of the characters are destroyed, or perhaps not even indicated in the first place, by the deliberate setting up of a soloist-conductor-audience relationship that makes each singer a solitary performer bent on disregarding his colleagues and pleasing the audience. Since this sort of behavior is habitual, it is reasonable to assume that Miss Webster considers it stylish and sophisticated to treat operatic acting in a manner that is a throwback to nineteenth-century conventions and nineteenth-century assumptions about the importance of star performers. In effect, her direction has taken away what little verisimilitude there was in the action in Désiré Defrère's old production; in place of real warmth and the exposure of motivations, she has given us even barer bones that we had before. Her treatment is a denigration of a libretto to which, as his letters show, Verdi gave unusual care and thought. The crudest, most rough-and-ready provincial performance at least tries to relate the characters to one another, or at least does not go to extraordinary lengths to make sure that no relationship can exist.

The principal virtue, then, of Miss Webster's collaboration, is that everything looked neat. The Triumphal Scene, in its aspects of pageantry, was reasonably impressive, although again I thought it looked tidy rather than grand, and the groups of supers did very unmusical things. I had better not go into the absence of musicality in Miss Webster's whole conception of the form and patterns of movement, for there is not room in this review for the bill of particulars it would be easy to present. And musicality or no musicality, I could not see why she could not arrange to get the stage cleared before Ritorna vincitor, since anyone who knows the elementary facts about the production of *Aida* knows that this is a difficult spot requiring perfect timing. As the chorus' exit was planned, it did not look as though it would ever be possible to get rid of them all in time—even granting that the first performance did not come off ideally. And there are five workable exits in the set.

In compensation for the lack of inner meaning in her direction, Miss Webster supplies a number of external aids to her singers. In Act II, Scene 1, Amneris expresses her jealousy of *Aida* by toying angrily with a coiled whip. By the time she seizes the whip, however, all vestiges of genuineness have already been dispelled by earlier events. Although Amneris seeks to curry favor with *Aida* by telling her that she occupies the status not of a slave but of a sister, she continues to lie imperiously on her raised couch, with *Aida* standing below her, as she makes these protestations of equality. This was

done, I judged, so that Amneris could employ the rhetorical device of standing in a dramatic moment a few minutes later; here once again emotional honesty was sacrificed for hollow effect.

BUT there are other matters to get to. Miss Nikolaidi's Amneris was a considerable disappointment. The role did not suit her voice, which did not have the columnar solidity, the full chest tones, or the freely resonant top notes the score demands. Her tone seldom took on any change in coloration, for the mere enunciation of the notes seemed to use her utmost resources of volume. She strove to attain a suitable dramatic accentuation, but in doing so made sacrifices of both line and tonal beauty. She looked beautiful, and her movement and gesture filled out Miss Webster's patterns, but she revealed no special individual intuitions as an actress. She made her best effect, as Amneris always does, in the Judgment Scene, but even here her conception was fundamentally choreographic rather than histrionic, by which I mean that poses and attitudes took the place of real acting. The scene was not without impact, however, and in the end proved to be one of the best portions of the evening.

Mr. Del Monaco sang every note loudly save one or two. His is a fine voice, a little throaty in the lower register, perhaps, but strong and clear and handsome in the crucial upper region. He carried his share in the Triumphal Scene and the Nile Scene duet excitingly, and made an exciting finish to the latter scene with his big, resonant A's. In both the opening Celeste *Aida* and the final scene he indulged in the bad habit of inserting prominent aspirates between syllables, and made loud humming noises in the interests of emotionalism. As a result many phrases that can become eloquent only through an intense, unbroken lyrical line were chopped up and rendered mannered and ugly. But his voice is an ornament to the company, and we shall no doubt learn to put up with his gaucheries of interpretation, as we have in the past with similarly endowed tenors. His acting embodied all that is worst in the exaggerated Italian tradition that is outlawed nowadays in the best Italian houses, and he was fond of turning on and off a gleaming, toothy smile. There could be no doubt, however, that he is a first-class personality, if not yet a first-class artist.

Mr. London's debut was, for me, the most significant event of the evening. Burdened with robes better suited to Wotan than to Amonasro—who, after all, was presumably leading an active outdoor life when he was captured—the young Canadian-born bass-baritone none the less gave a performance of such complete musical and tonal beauty and such penetrating understanding of every facet of the part that I am willing to say I have never encountered a better Amonasro. A really important artist has suddenly risen above the horizon. Unfortunately his European commitments permit him to sing only one role at the Metropolitan this season, but his future in this opera house is obviously unlimited.

Miss Milanov, I am unhappy to say, was not in her best voice. Although she remained a satisfactory *Aida* because of her basic knowledge of the best ways to deliver and inflect the music, the sound of her voice was not always ingratiating, and her upper tones were recalcitrant. She was patently nervous at the outset of the Nile Scene; in *O patria mia* her singing became more and more breathless, and she did not venture to employ more than a pale, ineffectual falsetto on the high C. In other passages she was far more assured, but she never really struck her best stride. Even so, her authoritative presence and her long acquaintance with traditional usages gave the performance a solidity provided by no one else except Mr. London.

Mr. Hines's Ramfis was richly intoned but utterly passive; it was hard to see why so colorless a fellow should occupy the position he does. Mr. Vichegonov was a capable vocalist as the King, but also left the character a cipher. His paleness, however, seemed to stem from Miss Webster's monolithic stylization. Miss Amara sang the Priestess' lines with grateful accuracy of pitch and rhythm, and Mr. Hayward took care of the Messenger's brief chore suitably.

The ballets represented Mr. Solov's first choreographic effort for the company, except for the revision in the Fledermaus ballet he made toward the end of last season. They were tasteless, even vulgar, slender in ideas, poorly related to the music, and sloppily executed. Miss Collins, a supple and gifted performer, was given a nightclub routine.

What the performance would have been without Mr. Cleve, it is difficult to imagine. Not by a flicker of his baton was it possible to guess what he felt about the many occurrences on the stage that tended to minimize or refute the point of the music he was conducting. It was a rather fast *Aida*, but it was in every way cohesive, and the tempos were never too rapid to permit the fullest declamatory and lyric effect short of mock-heroics and sentimentality. His may not be the only way to conduct *Aida*, but it certainly is one of the good ways. The playing of the orchestra was both precise and flexible, and the tone had sheen and glow. Above all else, there was always perfect accord between the singers and the orchestra, for in the few instances when minor difficulties arose Mr. Cleve's wonderfully flexible and clear stick technique was able to right matters before any noticeable discrepancies arose. Thanks to Mr. Cleve, the opera really was *Aida*.

### San Francisco Hears Quartet Series

SAN FRANCISCO.—On Oct. 25, the Griller String Quartet gave the first of three programs scheduled at the Museum of Art. The fine English ensemble played Beethoven and Mozart quartets and Arthur Bliss's Second Quartet. The Bliss work, being given its American premiere, combines brusque modern touches with romantic melodies in an interesting fashion.

Gerhart Muench, German pianist, made his San Francisco debut in the Marines Memorial Theatre on Oct. 26 with an unhackneyed program. He performed most impressively in Castelnuovo-Tedesco's Dances of King David and Tcherenpina's Etudes on a Chinese Scale.

Under the name of Saturday Music, a series of extremely well-devised programs in the Museum of Art has acquainted juvenile audiences with percussive, harp, and woodwind instruments and Latin American rhythms. San Francisco Symphony musicians have supplied the music with Anthony Freeman serving as an entertaining and informative commentator.

—MARJORY M. FISHER

### Singers To Aid Widow of Colleague

Several colleagues at the New York City Opera Company of the late Oscar Natzka, who died on Nov. 5, have offered to fill the bass's engagements wherever possible and turn over their fees to Mrs. Natzka. James Pease has already agreed to sing in performances of Handel's Messiah, at Ann Arbor on Dec. 8 and 9, for which Mr. Natzka was originally scheduled. Other members of the company who have expressed a desire to help out are Frances Yeend, David Lloyd, Robert Rounseville, Lawrence Winters, and Norman Scott. Mr. Scott took over from Mr. Natzka when he collapsed during a performance of Die Meistersinger.

## Rigo

(Continued from page 4)  
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# Rigoletto

(Continued from page 5)  
after three acts had been so brilliantly accomplished in an entirely different style. The set was a peculiar hodge-podge. At stage right stood one of the solid tower-like pieces that had seemed so fitting in the other acts. A large goalpost-like structure stood upstage. Center stage was a mass of rubble, a sort of broken stone platform with steps leading up to a higher platform at stage left. On the higher platform stood what the program coily described as "Sparafucile's Den."

This was one of those remarkable houses that can only be seen on opera stages. It consisted of a shed with a slanted roof, joined by a set of stairs to a narrow vertical building just high enough to receive the door at the top of them. If it was as wide as a bed is long it certainly didn't look it; presumably this is where Maddalena receives her gentlemen friends. The shed was missing its downstage wall, so it could be seen into. A window as large as the upper story of the rest of the structure was covered by a scrim curtain, so that when desired the audience could see into it too. Maddalena primped visibly there, and there the Duke bedded down in public view. The only thing the set clarified was the problem of why the Duke leaves so soon; the quarters were patently too cramped for him to stay all night.

With such a setting to work in it is hardly to be wondered at that Mr. Graf's direction of the fourth act was somewhat less than convincing. The end of all patience came when Maddalena, after Gilda's murder, drew a curtain across the open side of the shed. From the audience's point of view a wall is there, so why is a curtain there in the first place? The reason for this senseless bit of expressionism is obvious: Gilda has to be put in the sack; there is no reasonable place to accomplish this but in the shed; and what prima donna wants to be put in a sack with people

watching? Only a blackout could substitute for the curtains. But why hamstring your stage direction to begin with by adopting a set that forces violation of the basic assumptions of style that apply to all the rest of a production?

The lighting of this set was, exceptionally, atrocious; the storm that is so graphically described in the music seemed visually twenty miles away and no more than a drizzle at that.

THE musical features of the performance have been left until now because they were less strikingly novel than the visual ones—and make no mistake, the first three acts have not been surpassed in the present repertoire for appositeness, taste, and general theatrical effectiveness.

Mr. Warren's Rigoletto, always distinguished, was now enriched in numberless musical and dramatic details and sung with an even more richly colored outpouring of tone. He has never seemed a better artist or a finer singer. The other principals, although for the most part obviously of major-opera-house stature, did not quite reach the mark he set.

An unusually beautiful woman and an attractive stage figure, Miss Gueden did by far her best singing in the last act, when the nervousness attendant on so important a debut had had time to subside. Here she seemed more willing to sacrifice tone for more idiomatic expressiveness, with the result that the tone seemed even more lovely and her impersonation far less detached than before. Her voice proved to be a clear, cool one of healthy lyric-soprano dimensions. She vocalized everything in the score smoothly and without effort; it was when she tried for an unmarked messa di voce or went all out on an interpolated high note that the sound took on less attractive qualities. Perhaps when she feels more at home in this country she will be willing to take part in the revolution that Erna Berger started among Metropolitan Gildas when she sang the part as written.

Mr. Tucker sang with forthright expressiveness, and for him expressiveness seems to be becoming more and more the same thing as forthrightness. This approach made for some very exciting singing—perhaps most notably in the third-act cabaletta, *Possente amor*, which is restored in this production after having been cut in this country since time immemorial. It also made for some relatively hard and rough tones and for a lack of easy mezza voce. He had taken Mr. Graf's direction quite well, and gave a sound, dramatically aware performance.

Mr. Scott delivered Monterone's

imprecations with commanding presence and solid, telling vocalism. Mr. Pernerstorfer, however, seemed very ordinary as Sparafucile. He sang musically, if with what seemed an inordinately large variety of vocal productions, but he never made Sparafucile seem very much of a person. Mr. Brazis appeared momentarily and delivered his few bars with big, resonant tone.

Of the familiar singers, Miss Votipka gave by far the most creditable impersonation; it is singers like this who give solid backbone to opera companies. Jean Madeira (with a handsomely remodelled nose) looked pretty and abandoned enough to be a believable Maddalena, but failed to distinguish herself vocally except in the trio, where her tones were better focussed than before.

The minor functionaries around the court of Mantua were for the most part neither very good nor very bad. Miss Bollinger was an exception; she looked absolutely lovely as the Countess Ceprano and sang very well in her little duet. Clifford Harvuot's Marullo possibly had more snap (sometimes badly timed, it is true) than Lawrence Davidson's Ceprano or Paul Franke's Borsa, but none of them seemed particularly individual. Margaret Roggero was standard (only prettier than most) as the Page.

Mr. Erede's conducting of this Rigoletto was perhaps the best thing he has done since joining the Metropolitan a year ago. His tempos were just and eminently singable, and he shaped the over-all profile of the score extremely well. The only thing that was missing was the last degree of incisiveness, the final ability to get to all of Verdi's dramatic values. The chorus, prepared by Kurt Adler and Walter Taussig, sang with precision in dynamic shadings and a solid body of tone.

Mr. Solov's choreography was inoffensive.

## OPS Ruling Aids Symphony and Opera

WASHINGTON.—The Office of Price Stabilization has ruled that symphony orchestras and opera companies are theatrical enterprises and that consequently tickets to their performances are not subject to price control.

Such organizations were recently exempted by Congressional law from the federal admissions tax, and in almost all cases they have continued to charge admission prices that included the former tax. Since this constituted an actual raise in prices, there was doubt whether it was legal. The first informal OPS ruling on the subject stated that the practice did

violate the law on price ceilings. The official OPS ruling has now come to the rescue of the musical organizations.

At the same time, ballet companies were classified as theatrical enterprises, but their tax-exemption status has not yet been clarified.

## Bruckner Score Issued in Vienna

VIENNA.—The publication of Anton Bruckner's complete works, interrupted by the second World War, has been resumed with the issuing of the composer's Ninth Symphony by the Musikwissenschaftlichen Verlag, of this city. The next volume to appear will include the Fifth Symphony, being edited by Leopold Nowak, director of the Austrian National Library music department.

N	national	N
C	concert and	C
A	artists	A
C	corporation	C
MARKS LEVINE		
Director, Concert Division		
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## JEAN HANDZLIK

Contralto



ON THE EMBARCADERO

Martin Miller

Margaret Hershaw sees the sights of San Diego with officers of the local Civic Music Association. Seated: Mrs. Mullenix, Mrs. O. R. Evans, and Miss Hershaw. Standing: Donald H. Wilson, president; Evelyn Seifert; Carlos Mullenix; Sybil Conklin; and Robert MacDonald, accompanist

## JOHN ALAN HAUGHTON

John Alan Haughton, 71, a senior editor of *MUSICAL AMERICA*, died in University Hospital, New York, on Nov. 11.

He was born in Baltimore on Sept. 23, 1880, the son of Henry Osburne Haughton, of Carlow, Ireland, and Sophia Ridgely Alricks, of Baltimore. He graduated from Johns Hopkins University in 1903, continuing there as a post-graduate student in Romance languages.

He had his first voice lessons at the age of nineteen, with E. S. Kimball and Anne Goodhue, of Washington. He studied piano at the Peabody Graduate School and organ and theory privately with Frederick W. Wolff and W. G. Owst. He was a tenor soloist in Baltimore churches from 1900 to 1912.

In 1903 he entered Peabody Conservatory on a special scholarship, which was extended to cover four years. He studied singing with Pietro Minetti, Blanche Sylvana, and Adelin Fermin; piano with Maud Randolph and Howard Brockway; and theory with Otis B. Boise. He received his teacher's certificate in June, 1905, achieving the highest rating of any student there up to that time. He became a member of the teaching staff that fall, and retained that position until his resignation in 1913. Besides teaching singing, he was instrumental in establishing an opera class, assisted in staging productions, and conducted a chorus.

He came to New York in 1913 to study for two years with Oscar Saenger. In 1915 he became a member of the Washington Square Players (which developed into the Theatre Guild), taking leading roles in three productions. The next year he joined a similar group in Pittsburgh, the Little Theatre Company.

His journalistic debut was made with some music criticism for the Baltimore *Evening Star*, and he was on the staff of the *Opera Magazine* during its three months of existence in 1916-17. In the latter year he joined the editorial staff of *MUSICAL AMERICA*. He was given a leave of absence in March, 1918, to enlist in the United States Army, and he served in the tank corps in France for six months. After his demobilization, he resumed his position with this magazine, remaining with it until his death, with the exception of the years 1927-29, when it was under other management. He also maintained a vocal studio for a number of years.

His first published literary work was a translation of Dumas's novel *Olympe de Clèves*, in 1903. His verse was published in the *Saturday Evening Post* and *Poet Lore*, and he made over a hundred translations of the texts of French, German, Italian, Spanish and Russian songs, for various music publishers. He translated two works for the Drama League Series of Plays—Bernstein's *The Thief and Hervey's The Trail of the Torch*—the dialogue of *The Daughter of the Regiment*, *Fra Diavolo*, and *A Waltz Dream*; and the entire text of *Orpheus in Hades*, *The Bartered Bride*, and *The Poacher*. He also made English versions of Schubert's *Die Verschworene* and Weber's *Abu Hassan*. He translated Mirbeau's *Le Mauvais Berger* and Caillevet and De Fiers's *Le Roi* for a collection of contemporary French drama that was never published.

In 1934, Mr. Haughton began to study painting, first with Robert Brackman and later with Gordon Samstag and Margaret Patterson. He had a canvas hung by the American Artists Association in 1941.

At various times he acted as special musical correspondent in New York for the Cincinnati *Enquirer*, the Toronto *Mail and Empire*, and for thirteen years for the Baltimore *Sunday Sun*.

Surviving are a sister, Maud Haughton, of Baltimore, and two

brothers, Hugh Haughton, of Baltimore, and Frank Haughton, of Schenectady.

## OSCAR NATZKA

Oscar Natzka, 46, bass of the New York City Opera Company, died in a New York hospital on Nov. 5. Two weeks earlier he had suffered a cerebral hemorrhage while singing the role of Pogner in a performance of *Die Meistersinger*, and had barely finished his first-act aria when he had to be helped off stage. He was born in New Zealand, the son of a Russian immigrant and a New Zealand woman of English stock. He was a blacksmith apprentice at the age of fourteen before he received a scholarship to the Trinity College of Music in London, where he studied with Albert Garcia. He first sang in opera at Covent Garden under the direction of Sir Thomas Beecham. He served six years in the Royal Canadian Navy, rising to the rank of commander and appearing in the revue *Meet the Navy*. After the war, he returned to sing at Covent Garden. Tours of South Africa, Australia, and New Zealand preceded his debut with the New York City Opera, as Sparafucile in *Rigoletto*, on April 19, 1948. Besides filling many roles with the company, he also appeared in concert with symphony orchestras.

## HUGO LEICHTENTRITT

CAMBRIDGE, MASS.—Hugo Leichtentritt, 77, musicologist, died here on Nov. 13. Born in Pleschen, near Posen, Poland, he came to the United States in 1889 and studied from 1891 to 1894 at Harvard, where his composition teacher was John Knowles Paine. After further study in Paris, he went to Germany, receiving his Ph. D. degree in 1901 from the University of Berlin. The subject of his thesis was Reinhold Keiser's operas.

He remained in Berlin as a teacher, writer, and music critic, and he served in the German army in the first World War. With the advent of Hitler in 1933, he returned to the United States, where he was appointed lecturer on music at Harvard University. He also taught at Radcliffe College and New York University.

He edited several volumes of the *Denkmäler deutscher Tonkunst*. He wrote numerous books, including *Serge Koussevitzky: The Boston Symphony Orchestra and the New American Music*; *Music, History and Ideas*; the recently published *Musical Form*; and biographies of Chopin, Busoni, and Handel.

His musical compositions include two operas, symphonic works, chamber music, almost 100 songs, choral works, and works for solo voice and orchestra.

## NICOLAS MEDTNER

LONDON.—Nicholas Medtner, 71, Russian composer, died here on Nov. 13. Born in Moscow, he attended the conservatory there, studying piano with Safonoff and composition with Arensky and Tanaieff. He toured Europe briefly as a pianist before becoming a teacher at the Moscow Conservatory, but retired in 1903 to devote himself to composing.

In 1922 he set out on another European tour, making his home in Germany. He made his New York debut in 1924 in Carnegie Hall as soloist in his own C minor Piano Concerto, with the Philadelphia Orchestra, conducted by Leopold Stokowski. He lived for a while in the

United States, then in France, and finally, in 1936, he settled in England.

He composed a great number of piano pieces, of which the *Fairy Tales* are perhaps the most popular; songs, including a *Sonata-Vocalise*; violin and piano sonatas; and three piano concertos. He was the author of a book called *Muse and Fashion*. Four years ago his works attracted the attention of the Maharajah of Mysore, who promoted the recording of several of them.

## SIGMUND ROMBERG

Sigmund Romberg, 64, operetta composer, died in his New York hotel suite on Nov. 8. A native of Nagykanizsa, Hungary, he showed musical talent at an early age. He graduated from the University of Bucharest, where he studied engineering, and served in the Austrian army before he settled down to serious music study. When he arrived in New York in 1909, seeking a music career, he was obliged to work first in a pencil factory and later in restaurants, where he wrote songs for the entertainers.

In 1911 he had his first song published, and he organized his own restaurant orchestra. His first produced show was *The Midnight Girl*, in 1913, and his first nationally successful song was *Auf Wiedersehen*, from *The Blue Paradise*. He went on to compose more than 2,000 songs and many operettas, including *Maytime*, *The Student Prince*, *Blossom Time*, *The New Moon*, *The Desert Song*, and *Up in Central Park*. He composed for motion pictures, and he appeared as a conductor and pianist with his own orchestra on the radio and in extensive concert tours.

## H. A. CONDELL

H. A. Condell, 45, scenic designer for the New York City Opera Company, died in New York on Nov. 6. Born and educated in Germany, a former associate of Max Reinhardt, and a designer for the Berlin Civic Opera and the Jewish Kulturbund Theatre, he came to this country in 1939. He designed settings for operatic and theatrical groups in New York, Washington, and Philadelphia, until he joined the New York City Opera, for which he created the sets for *La Bohème* in 1944. He later provided the décor for such operas as *Aida*, *Faust*, *The Marriage of Figaro*, *Salome*, and *Die Meistersinger*—the last generally considered his most significant achievement.

He also designed the sets for *The Barrier*, a musical drama presented on Broadway in 1950. He was art director of the Dramatic Workshop and Technical Institute in New York. He is survived by his wife, Luba; a son, Cary; and his parents.

## STEWART B. SABIN

Stewart B. Sabin, 82, for more than twenty years music editor and critic of the Rochester *Democrat and Chronicle*, died at his home in the Hotel Devon, New York, on Nov. 15, following a heart attack.

A native of Chicago, he received an M. A. degree from Williams College in 1889. He returned to Chicago, where he was organist for eleven years for the Central Music Hall. He was also principal of Medill High School, taught at Armour Institute, and was on the staff of the Chicago *Tribune*. Moving to Brooklyn, he wrote for the *Eagle*, was a free lance journalist, taught organ, and was organist in various churches. When he

went to Rochester, he worked first for the *Herald*, then became managing editor of the *Post-Express*, and finally joined the *Democrat and Chronicle* in 1920. He retired from this position in 1942, moving to New York in 1945.

Also in Rochester he was organist for the First Presbyterian Church from 1901 to 1908 and the Methodist Church from 1910 to 1913, as well as for other churches. He was the first public relations director for the Eastman School of Music, continuing in that post until his retirement in 1942, and he wrote a history of music in early Rochester that was published by the Rochester Historical Society.

He was married in 1901 to Evelyn Coleman. Besides his wife, he is survived by a son, Robert, senior editor of *MUSICAL AMERICA*; a daughter, married to the pianist Leopold Mannes; and a granddaughter, Elena Mannes.

## ROBERT B. SMITH

Robert B. Smith, 76, librettist and lyricist for more than forty musical comedies, died at his home in New York on Nov. 6. He was the author for such successful works as *Victor Herbert's Sweethearts* and *Reinhardt's The Spring Maid*. His elder brother was the late Harry B. Smith, the most prolific librettist of his day, and they often collaborated on shows. He wrote the lyrics for *Come Down Ma Evenin' Star*, Lillian Russell's most famous song. He is survived by his wife, the former Marguerite Wright, who succeeded Christie MacDonald as leading lady of *The Spring Maid*.

## NAT BRUSILOFF

LARCHMONT, N. Y.—Nat Brusiloff, 47, violinist and conductor, died at his home here on Nov. 3. Russian born, he was a violinist with the Baltimore Symphony before becoming concertmaster with theatre orchestras and later conductor of orchestras for radio shows starring Kate Smith, Bing Crosby, and others.

## ANDY RIZZO

DENVER.—Andy Rizzo, accordion player and founder and director of the Rizzo School of Music in Chicago, died here on Aug. 15. Mr. Rizzo was also founder and president of the Midwest Accordion Association, which commissioned an accordion concerto from Roy Harris. Mr. Rizzo was soloist in the premiere of the work in Chicago in 1947.

## MRS. ARTHUR E. RANNEY

SPRINGFIELD, MASS.—Mrs. Arthur E. Ranney, 70, retired supervisor of music in Springfield elementary public schools, died at her home here on Nov. 4.

## Music Therapists Hold Annual Convention

CHICAGO.—The second annual convention of the National Association for Music Therapy was held at the La Salle Hotel here on Nov. 9, 10, and 11. Esther Goetz Gilliland, chairman of the music-therapy department at Chicago Musical College, chairman of the music department of Wilson Junior College, and music-therapy counselor to Sigma Alpha Iota, was elected president of the association. The new first and second vice-presidents are E. Thayer Gaston, of the University of Kansas, and Myrtle Fish Thompson, of the Essex County Overbrook Hospital, Cedar Grove, N. Y. Edwina Eustis, director of hospital music for the Musicians Emergency Fund, New York, was elected secretary. Re-elected as treasurer was Mrs. Hartweg Dierks, chairman of hospital and hospital workshops of the National Federation of Music Clubs. The next convention will be held in Topeka, Kan., during the first two weeks of November, 1952.

## REC

### Melodram Verismo

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# RECORDS

## Melodrama by Sardou; Verismo Music by Giordano

Giordano's *Fedora*, a tense and enthusiastic setting of a Sardou play in which Fanny Davenport was famous in this country in the 1880s, has not enjoyed the popular favor accorded to Puccini's treatment of Sardou's *La Tosca*. And admittedly *Fedora* is not as striking a score as *Tosca*, nor is the story, with its plot revolving about Parisian intrigues by Russian nihilists, as suitable fodder for public consumption as the *Tosca-Cavaradossi-Scarpia* triangle. But the opera is written with high theatrical craft, and its best moments—notably the tenor aria *Amor ti vieta* and the despairing aria of *Fedora*, *Dio di giustizia*, in the last act—belong high up on the list of effective verismo achievements. Under the baton of Mario Rossi, the music is dramatically presented in this distinguished Cetra-Soria release. Maria Caniglia, perhaps the world's greatest living mistress of the highly emotionalized *spinto* style, and Giacinto Prandelli, now of the Metropolitan's tenor roster, sing with exceptional emotional power and technical adroitness, and the whole vocal and instrumental mise-en-scène is remarkably convincing.

—C. S.

## Two Complete Wagner Operas: Die Meistersinger and Tristan

Venturing into the almost unexplored realm of complete Wagner recordings, Urania has produced full-length sets of *Die Meistersinger* (six LP records) and *Tristan und Isolde* (five records). Both were recorded in Europe. In *Die Meistersinger*, Rudolf Kempe conducts the chorus of the Dresden State Opera and the Saxon State Orchestra. The chief soloists are Tiana Lemnitz (Eva), Emilie Walther-Sacks (Magdalena), Bernd Aldenhoff (Walther), Ferdinand Frantz (Hans Sachs), Gerhard Unger (David), and Kurt Bohme (Pogner). In *Tristan und Isolde*, Franz Konwitschny conducts the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra and the Mitteldeutsche Rundfunk Chorus. The principals are Margarete Bäumer (Isolde), Erna Westenberg (Brangäne), Ludwig Suthaus (Tristan), Gottlob Frick (Marke), Karl Wolfram (Kurwenal), and Theodor Horn (Melot).

Both albums are valuable documentary possessions, since the performances are sound, and never fail to give a good idea of how the music goes. The *Meistersinger* set, however, gives by far the greater auditory pleasure of the two. Miss Lemnitz is an exquisite Eva, and except for Mr. Aldenhoff, whose singing is far wide of the mark, all the others are capable and persuasive. The choral passages are admirably done, and the recording is bright and fresh. *Tristan und Isolde*, on the other hand, is badly vocalized by the two central artists; although they obviously know their parts in authoritative fashion, their singing is prevailingly uninviting. The recording, moreover, is somewhat less satisfactory than that of *Die Meistersinger*.

—C. S.

## Last Act of Die Walküre Recorded at Bayreuth Festival

The third act of the performance of *Die Walküre* given at Bayreuth on Aug. 12, 1951, was recorded by Columbia, and is now issued with the public blessing of Wieland and Wolfgang Wagner, artistic directors of the festival. Herbert von Karajan conducts. Astrid Varnay is the Brünnhilde, Leonie Rusanek the Sieglinde, and Sigurd Björling the Wotan. As a historical document the recording is welcome, even if it is not distinguished. In recording an actual

performance it was not always possible to control acoustical balances satisfactorily. The orchestra is not always clear in the inner and under parts, and the relationship of the singers to the microphone and to the body of orchestral tone undergoes frequent variation. The orchestra itself is only moderately competent, and is sometimes downright crude. Mr. von Karajan seems to have less sympathy for the Wagner score than he showed for Mozart in his *Magic Flute* and *Nozze di Figaro* recordings. The three chief singers are intelligent and authoritative, but Mr. Björling's voice is prevailingly dry, Miss Rusanek's frequently goes wild, and Miss Varnay's nearly always wobbles. A disappointment.

—C. S.

## First American Release Of Rossi-Lemeni Recordings

On a single twelve-inch record, Cetra-Soria has brought together a variety of songs and arias chosen to show the range of Nicola Rossi-Lemeni's abilities. The 29-year-old bass, who made his American operatic debut as Boris Godunoff, in San Francisco in September, demonstrates the imaginative power and vocal communicativeness of his interpretation of that role in performances of the monologue and Clock Scene from the second act of the Moussorgsky opera. Equally impressive are *Le veau d'or*, from Gounod's *Faust*, and *Ecco il mondo*, from Boito's *Mefistofele*. Ella giammai m'amò, from Verdi's *Don Carlo*, sounds excessively theatrical and a bit lachrymose. The songs included are Beethoven's *In questa tomba oscura*, Schumann's *Widmung*, Brahms's *Die Mainacht*, Ibert's *Chanson de la Mort*, Moussorgsky's *Song of the Flea*, and the Russian folk song *Lament of a Siberian Prisoner*. This last and the Brahms song are the most striking; in the Beethoven and Schumann, both of which he treats sentimentally, he hardly seems an ideal lieder singer.

—C. S.

## Un Giorno di Regno, Verdi's Second Opera

Verdi's second opera, staged under the title *Il Finto Stanislao* in 1840, a year after the premiere of *Oberto*, is a comic piece, full of echoes of Donizetti and Rossini, without, as Francis Toye observes, "the grace of the one or the exuberant sparkle of the other." No doubt this recording of the obscure little work under its original subtitle, *Un Giorno di Regno*, produced during the Verdi anniversary year in Italy, will be caviare to the general. But the score contains much that is bright and amusing, if little that is pointed in the way of musical characterization. The performance, conducted by Alfredo Simonetto, is gay and lively, and contributions of real virtuosity are made by Lina Pagliughi, soprano; Renato Capocci, baritone (now a member of the Metropolitan); and Sesto Bruscantino, bass. Except for the dubious merits of the score, the set is one of the very best issued by Cetra-Soria, to whom we owe the remarkable and rapidly growing list of little-known Verdi operas that is now available in this country.

—C. S.

## Verdi's La Traviata Conducted by Toscanini

Each of the operas broadcast by Arturo Toscanini and the NBC Symphony has been recorded at the time of its presentation. Until now, the master discs have remained in the archives of RCA Victor, awaiting Mr. Toscanini's permission to release them. At last he has consented to the issuing of Verdi's *La Traviata*, recorded from broadcasts in December, 1946. It is said that Puccini's *La Bohème* and Verdi's *Otello* and *Falstaff* may also be released before long; Verdi's *Aida* has not passed

muster with him, and apparently never will.

The chief principals in the recording of *La Traviata* are Licia Albanese, Jan Peerce, and Robert Merrill. All of them, and the lesser singers as well, are guided by the exigent will of the conductor to the extent that the individual performances seem less significant than the impression of the whole. All of them, actually, have sung better on other occasions, when they were under less frightening discipline. But Mr. Toscanini achieves his end—a cohesive performance in which vocal and instrumental details are perfectly and precisely coordinated. The orchestra is charged with vitality, and many passages make a more incisive effect than usual. On the whole, however, the performance is somewhat breathless; one misses the illusion of the unfolding of a drama on the stage, for everything is pushed through without a split second of wasted time. Certainly this is the most efficient *La Traviata* ever presented, but I am not sure it is the most communicative one.

—C. S.

## Vocal

FALLA: Seven Popular Spanish Songs. GRANADOS: Tonadillas. Conchita Supervia, mezzo-soprano. (Decca). If anybody wonders why record-lovers place such a high value on the singing of the late Conchita Supervia they can buy this record and find out. Decca has done a real service for lovers of fine vocalism in re-releasing these marvellous examples of richness, flexibility, and, above all, style. For the record, it might be noted that only seven of the ten Tonadillas are here.

—J. H., JR.

FOLK SONGS. Richard Dyer-Bennet, tenor. (Remington). Lord Randall, The White Lily, Kitty My Love, The Rising of the Moon, The Wife Wrapt in Sheepskin, My Good Old Man, Lowlands, John Henry, The Golden Vanity, Greensleeves, Bonnie Dundee, Pull off Your Old Coat, Binnorie, The Laird O' Cockpen, The Lonesome Dove, and The Kerry Recruit.

FRIML and STOTHART: Excerpts from *Rose Marie*. Dorothy Kirsten, soprano; Nelson Eddy, baritone; Howard Chandler Chorus and Orchestra, Leon Arnaud conducting. (Columbia).

KERN: Eight songs from musical comedies. Dorothy Kirsten, soprano; Percy Faith and his orchestra and chorus. (Columbia).

LEHAR: Songs from *The Merry Widow*. Giuditta, Eva, The Land of Smiles, and *Der Rastelbinder*. Aulikki Rautawaara, soprano; Peter Anders, tenor; German Opera House Orchestra; Hans Schmidt-Isserstedt and Peter Kreuder, conductors. STRAUS, OSKAR: Excerpts from *The Chocolate Soldier*, *A Waltz Dream*, and *The Three Waltzes*. Madlon Harder and Rosl Segars, sopranos; Jean Lohe,

(Continued on page 28)

**Clarence E Cramer**  
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"Top Award" Radio Symphony

**Roth String Quartet**

**Chicago Piano Trio**  
Louis Kohnop—Adele Tilson—Harold Eisberg

**Page-Stone Ballet**  
Ruth Page, Bentley Stone, 20 people

**Katherine Flowers Dancers**  
Folklore Negro Dances; 8 people

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June Browne & Daniel Cobb

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#### CONTRALTO AT BAYREUTH

Pauline Nessi poses with Sigmund Spaeth in front of the Festspielhaus in Bayreuth while the 1951 Wagner festival was in progress

#### Basel Orchestra To Mark Anniversary

**BASEL.**—The Basel Chamber Orchestra will celebrate its 25th anniversary this season with a jubilee concert on Jan. 24, when it will perform for the first time two works especially written in its honor—Benjamin Britten's *Divertimento* (1951) and Paul Hindemith's *Symphony, The Harmony of the World*. Paul Sacher is founder and conductor of the ensemble. Frank Martin's *Violin Concerto* will also be given its world premiere in this program, with Hans Heinz Schneeberger as soloist. A new cantata by Arthur Honegger will be offered at the orchestra's March 14 concert.

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Walter Terry, N.Y. Herald Tribune

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**TROXELL**  
Soprano  
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## RECORDS

(Continued from page 27)

tenor; Berlin State Opera orchestra and chorus; Hans Schindler, conductor. (Capitol-Telefunken).

**MAHLER:** Kindertotenlieder. Kathleen Ferrier, contralto; Vienna Philharmonic, Bruno Walter conducting. (Columbia). A real quality performance of these beautiful, desolate songs, and certainly one of the finest things Miss Ferrier has done on records. Perhaps her singing is not quite the ultimate in explicit emotionalization, but it is rich, warm, and always communicative, and Mr. Walter's conducting is marvelously broad and responsive to the music.

—J. H. JR.

**MOZART:** Operatic Arias, from Don Giovanni, The Magic Flute, and The Marriage of Figaro. Ezio Pinza, bass; RCA Victor Orchestra and Chorus, Alfred Wallenstein conducting. (RCA Victor). Not nearly as sumptuous of voice as the Pinza of earlier years, but masterly in style and theatrically forceful.

—C. S.

**OPERATIC RECITAL.** Claudia Muzio, soprano. Reissue on a single LP of 78-rpm recordings: **BELLINI:** *Casta diva*, from *Norma*; *Ah, non credea mirarti*, from *La Sonnambula*. **BOITO:** *L'altra notte, from Mefistofele*. **CILEA:** *Esser madre è un inferno*, from *L'Arlesiana*. **GIORDANO:** *La mamma morta*, from *Andrea Chenier*. **PUCINI:** *Mi chiamano Mimì*, from *La Bohème*. **VERDI:** *Pace, pace, mio Dio*, from *La Forza del Destino*; *Duets from Otello* (with Francesco Merli, tenor); *Addio del passato*, from *La Traviata*. (Columbia).

**STRAUSS, JOHANN:** Highlights from The Gypsy Baron. Maud Cunitz, soprano; Walther Ludwig and Hans Hopf, tenors; Rudolf Lamy Chorus; Bavarian Radio Orchestra; Werner Schmidt-Boelcke and Gustav Gorlick, conductors. (Mercury).

**THE GREAT CARUSO.** Mario Lanza, tenor. (RCA Victor). Operatic arias as recorded for the motion picture.

#### Choral

**BACH:** Magnificat in D. Winterthur Orchestra, Winterthur Mixed Chorus, and Reinhart Chorus, conducted by Walter Reinhart. (Concert Hall). The vocal soloists in this performance are Maria Stader, soprano; Elsa Cavelti, contralto; Ernst Haefliger, tenor; and Hermann Schey, bass. The organist is Karl Mathaei; and the harpsichordist no less than Tooty Hunziger-Druey. The performance is heavy and undistinguished. The recording is blurry at times.

—R. S.

**GREAT SACRED CHORUSES.** Robert Shaw Chorale, Robert Shaw, conductor; Hugh Porter, organist. (RCA Victor). Contains the Hallelujah choruses from Handel's *Messiah* and Beethoven's *The Mount of Olives*, and familiar excerpts from works by Haydn, Mozart, Mendelssohn, Berlioz, Gounod, and Stainer.

**HANDEL:** Ode for St. Cecilia's Day. Lore Hoffmann, soprano; Walter Ludwig, tenor; Rudolf Lamy Chorus; Symphony Orchestra of Radio Berlin, Arthur Rother, conductor; Hermann Werdermann, organ; Walter Drwenski, harpsichord. (Urania). A notable item in the Handel revival currently taking place in the record field.

—C. S.

**KODÁLY:** *Missa Brevis in Tempore Belli*. **BRITTEN:** *Rejoice in the Lamb*. Chancel Choir of the National Presbyterian Church of Washington, D. C., Theodore Schaefer, conduc-

tor and organist. (WCFM Recording Corp.). Two unusually fine contemporary works, excellently performed and recorded are paired in one of the most satisfactory choral issues of the year. Kodály employs a relatively conservative harmonic idiom in his mass, written in 1945 in Budapest, but he does so with such subtlety and mastery as to create a work refreshing and alive. Britten's festival cantata, composed in 1943, has an extraordinary text—it tells among other things how a cat and a mouse glorify God—drawn from the *Jubilate Agno* of Christopher Smart, an eighteenth-century religious poet who was slightly mad. In setting it to music Britten has come up with some of his most inspired and felicitous ideas. The American premiere of the Kodály mass was given by the choir under the direction of the composer, and its performance under Mr. Schaefer's direction might be considered definitive, while the Britten work is given equally exemplary treatment.

—R. E.

**THE MORMON TABERNACLE CHOIR OF SALT LAKE CITY.** Frank Asper, organist; J. Spencer Cornwall, conductor. (Columbia). Volume 1, containing twelve hymns.

**RELIGIOUS MUSIC SUNG BY DON COSACK CHORUS.** Serge Jaroff, conductor. (Columbia). Contains liturgical music by Gretchaninoff, Rachmaninoff, Tchaikovsky, and Tchesnokoff, as well as traditional works.

#### Unusual Russian Works Played by Moscow Orchestra

In a two-record album labeled *Symphonic Selections, Colosseum* offers several unusual Russian compositions, played by the Bolshoi Theatre Orchestra, with N. Golovanoff, A. Orloff, S. Samosud, and A. Melik-Pashaieff as conductors. The Orchestra of the famous Moscow theatre is heard in Rimsky-Korsakoff's *Serbian Fantasy*, Dubinushka, and the *Procession from Mlada*; Moussorgsky's *Scherzo in B flat major*; Liadoff's *Polonaise in D major, Op. 49*; Balakireff's *Overture on Three Russian Themes*; and Tchaikovsky's *The Tempest*, the 1812 *Overture*, and the *Battle of Poltava* from *Mazeppa*. Aside from the 1812 *Overture* and, to some extent, *The Tempest*, these works are almost never played in American concert halls. They are largely curiosities, each with passages of interest that fail to add up to a significant whole. *The Tempest*, the best and longest of the selections, has considerable power and thematic beauty. The *Battle of Poltava* resembles the 1812 *Overture*, particularly since they have a principle theme in common. The Balakireff *Overture* is quite striking in its treatment of the folk tune *In the Field* there Stands a Birch Tree, used twenty years later by Tchaikovsky in his *Fourth Symphony*. The recordings vary greatly, from the technical point of view, without ever being first-rate. At their worst they sound like old-fashioned, pre-acoustical recordings. Because of this it is hard to judge accurately the quality of performance, but it would seem to be always competent, sometimes excellent, with the strings making a better showing than the winds.

—R. E.

#### Orchestral

**BARTÓK:** *Music for Stringed Instruments, Percussion, and Celesta*. **BLOCH:** *Concerto Grosso*, for string orchestra with piano obbligato. Chicago Symphony, Rafael Kubelik, conductor; George Schick, pianist. (Mercury). An acoustical marvel; musically persuasive interpretations of both works.

—C. S.

**BRUCKNER:** *Symphony No. 2, C*

minor. Linz Bruckner Orchestra, Ludwig George Jochum, conductor. *Symphony No. 4, E flat major* (Romantic). Leipzig Symphony, Herman Abendroth, conductor. (Urania.) Both symphonies are admirably interpreted by orchestras and conductors fully acquainted with the style and spirit of the music. The *Fourth Symphony* is a nobler and more arresting score than the *Second Symphony*, and the recording is more resonant and lifelike. Both sets, however, will be invaluable treasures for the growing audience of Bruckner admirers.

—C. S.

**CARNEGIE POPS PROGRAM II.** Carnegie Pops Orchestra, Charles O'Connell conducting. (Columbia). Includes works by Rachmaninoff, Schubert, Grainger, Herbert, Liadoff, and Glière.

**DUKAS:** *The Sorcerer's Apprentice*. GRÉTRY-MOTTET: *Suite from Céphale et Pocris*. INR Symphony of Brussels, Franz André, conductor. (Capitol-Telefunken).

**GERSHWIN:** *An American in Paris*; *Rhapsody in Blue*. Alec Templeton, pianist; orchestra conducted by André Kostelanetz. (Columbia). Brisk, neat, and to the point.

—C. S.

**GERSHWIN:** *An American in Paris*. NEWMAN, ALFRED: *Motion-picture themes*. Hollywood Symphony, Alfred Newman, conductor. (Mercury).

**HOLIDAY IN VIENNA.** Alexander Schneider String Ensemble. (Columbia). Includes Strauss and Lanner waltzes arranged by Mr. Schneider.

**HUMPERDINCK:** *Moorish Rhapsody*. Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, Herman Abendroth, conductor. (Urania.) Perhaps the most uninteresting forty-minute piece ever written.

—C. S.

**MOUSSORGSKY:** *Pictures at an Exhibition* (orchestrated by Ravel). Chicago Symphony, Rafael Kubelik, conductor. (Mercury.) Made by a new recording technique eliminating spurious "ultra-wide" frequencies, which reproduces the tone quality of the Chicago Symphony in Orchestra Hall to a degree that is, to one acquainted with the orchestra and the hall over the years, altogether amazing. This is not just another of the multitude of recordings of indistinguishably brilliant orchestras; it is specifically and recognizably the Chicago Symphony. The music is well, if rather unimaginatively, played; in this case, the engineering is more significant than the interpretation.

—C. S.

**MOZART:** *Quartet, A major, K. 464*; *Quartet, F major, K. 500*. Amadeus String Quartet. (Westminster). Two of the quartets dedicated to Haydn, played by an exceptionally perceptive, beautifully balanced, unforced English group that is now, in its fourth year, rightfully attaining international prominence.

—C. S.

**MUSIC AT MIDNIGHT.** Morton Gould and his orchestra. (Columbia). Includes such songs as *Moonglow* and *Mood Indigo*.

**MUSIC FOR ORCHESTRA AND INVITATION TO THE BALLET:** Hollywood Symphony, Alfred Newman, conductor. (Mercury). Includes *The Sailor's Dance*, from Glière's *The Red Poppy*, and eleven comparable works.

**MUSIC OF VICTOR HERBERT.** André Kostelanetz and his orchestra. (Columbia). Nineteen selections from the composer's light operas, operas, and orchestral works.

**NORTH, ALEX:** *A Streetcar Named Desire*. Music from the sound track of the motion picture. Ray Heindorf, conductor. (Capitol).

**PROKOFIEFF:** *Scythian Suite*; *Lieutenant Kijé Suite*. Vienna Symphony, Hermann Scherchen con-

(Continued on page 29)

## RECO

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## RECORDS

(Continued from page 28)

ducting. (Westminster.) Neither of these suites is new on records, but Mr. Scherchen's command of both scores is extraordinary, and the recorded sound is most satisfying.

—C. S.

**PROKOFIEFF:** Suite from The Love for Three Oranges; Suite from Lieutenant Kijé. French National Symphony, Roger Désormière conducting. (Capitol). Crisp performances; good recording.

—C. S.

**SCHUBERT:** Symphony No. 8, B minor (Unfinished); Incidental Music to Rosamunde. Bamberg Symphony, Robert Heger, conductor. (Mercury).

**SIBELIUS:** Finlandia. Göteborg Symphony, Sixten Eckerberg conducting. CHABRIER: España. Berlin Philharmonic, Hans Schmidt-Isserstedt conducting. (Capitol-Telefunken).

**TCHAIKOVSKY:** Suite from The Nutcracker. Kurt Graunke Orchestra, Werner Schmidt-Boelcke conducting. (Mercury).

### Chamber Music

**BRACHS:** Piano Quartet, A major, Op. 26. Albeneri Trio (Erich Ito Kahn, piano; Giorgio Ciampi, violin; Benar Heifetz, cello); Raphael Hillyer, viola. (Mercury).

**CHAUSSON:** Concerto for Violin, Piano, and String Quartet. Louis Kaufman, violinist; Artur Balsam, pianist; Pascal String Quartet. (Concert Hall).

**DVORAK:** Quintet No. 3, E flat, Op. 97. Budapest Quartet; Milton Katims, violist. (Columbia).

**FAURÉ:** Trio, D minor, Op. 120. RAVEL: Trio, A minor. Albeneri Trio. (Mercury).

**HINDEMITH:** Quartet No. 3, Op. 22. PROKOFIEFF: Quartet No. 2, Op. 92. Hollywood String Quartet. (Capitol).

**SCHUBERT:** Octet, Op. 166. Vienna Konzerthaus Quartet; Leopold Wlach, clarinet; Karl Oehlberger, bassoon; Gottfried von Freiberg, horn; Josef Harmann, double bass. (Westminster.) One of the most beautiful chamber-music performances ever recorded, of one of the most beautiful chamber-music pieces ever written. The Viennese players maintain an ensemble of utter perfection, in which every note and phrase seems to have precisely the right value, and they capture all the seraphic sweetness and simple nobility of the music.

—C. S.

**SCHUMANN:** Quintet, E flat major. Budapest String Quartet; Clifford Curzon, pianist. (Columbia).

### Violin

**BACH:** Sonata No. 2, B minor, for violin alone. Georges Enesco, violinist. (Remington).

**BAROQUE SONATAS FOR VIOLIN:** Teleman: Sonatas, A minor and G minor. Tartini: Sonata, B flat major. Mattheson: Sonata, E minor. Louis Kaufman, violinist; Antoine Geoffroy-Dechaune, harpsichordist. (Lyricord). These charming works are rather fuzzily reproduced in some passages.

—R. S.

**BARTÓK:** Sonata No. 1 for Violin and Piano. Isaac Stern, violinist; Alexander Zakin, pianist. (Columbia). Mr. Stern disposes of the technical problems with sovereign ease, but his interpretation of this work is too superficial to communicate its rhapsodic nature. Mr. Zakin plays brilliantly but too subserviently.

—R. S.

**BEETHOVEN:** Violin Sonata, G major, Op. 96. Tossy Spivakovsky, violinist; Rudolf Firkusny, pianist. KREISLER, PAGANINI, SARASATE, and TCHAIKOVSKY: Various short pieces. Tossy Spivakovsky, violinist; Artur Balsam, pianist. (Columbia).

**BRACHS:** Violin Sonata, G major. Isaac Stern, violinist; Alexander Zakin, pianist. (Columbia). A controlled and shapely, yet intense and tonally beautiful, performance.

—C. S.

**DELIUS:** Sonata No. 1 for Violin and Piano. BENNETT: A Song Sonata. Louis Kaufman, violinist; Theodore Saldenberg, pianist. (Concert Hall). Neither Delius' sonata nor that of Robert Russell Bennett represents its composer at his best. Consequently, Mr. Kaufman cannot be blamed if the recording is not all-absorbing. The sound reproduction is not good, either.

—R. S.

**INTERNATIONAL-AMERICANA.** Works by Kodály, Sibelius, Milhaud, Achron, Guarnieri, Prokofieff, McBride, Helm, Still, Triggs, and Copland. Louis Kaufman, violinist; Annette Kaufman and Theodore Saldenberg, pianists. (Concert Hall).

**MOZART:** Six Sonatas for Piano and Violin—C major, K. 296; F major, K. 377; B flat major, K. 378; G major, K. 379; E flat major, K. 380; E flat major, K. 481. Lili Kraus, pianist; Szymon Goldberg, violinist. (Decca). Both artists have taste and an obvious love for Mozart. It is a pity that Miss Kraus did not restrain her superabundant temperament in some passages or that Mr. Goldberg did not spur himself to play them with more brio. Apart from these considerations, the recordings are delightful. The Decca engineers give a precise and sharply defined reproduction.

—R. S.

**STRAVINSKY:** Duo Concertant, for violin and piano. COPLAND: Sonata for Violin and Piano. Joseph Fuchs, violinist; Leo Smit, pianist. (Decca). These two performances can be recommended without reservation. The playing is superb, and the recording is a triumph of reproduction.

—R. S.

### Piano

**BARTÓK:** Excerpts from Mikrokosmos. Bela Bartók, pianist. (Columbia). The 153 short piano pieces, collected in six graded volumes, entitled Mikrokosmos offer an extraordinary opportunity to study the creative and experimental mind of Béla Bartók in small-scale pieces that are uncomplicated by the evolution of long forms or the exploitation of orchestral sonority. Thirty-five of these—studies in rhythm, harmony, counterpoint, and texture—are played by the composer himself in a recording made not long before his death in 1945, and now released by Columbia as the third in its Meet the Composer series.

—C. S.

**CHOPIN:** Ballade in A flat major; Scherzo in C sharp minor. Claudio Arrau, pianist. Prelude in E minor; Impromptu in F sharp major. Lili Kraus, pianist. Nocturne in E flat major; Nocturne in B major. Eileen Joyce, pianist. (Decca). Mr. Arrau gives suave, considered performances; otherwise this record is interesting mainly for the varieties of rubato it contains.

—J. H., Jr.

**CHOPIN:** 24 Preludes. Claudio Arrau, pianist. (Columbia). No task exposes a pianist to more exacting criticism than the performance of Chopin's book of preludes, which are encrusted with a great weight

of tradition, sentiment, and sheer prejudice. Mr. Arrau's realization of this music is one of his finest achievements. He approaches it with complete scholarly fidelity to the musical text, even to the point of reinstating certain corrections of customary practice that are borne out by the Urtext. Yet an enkindling poetic imagination removes his playing from any trace of academicism; and it goes without saying that his technique is in every way adequate to his needs. Columbia's engineers have supported him with one of their best jobs of piano recording.

—C. S.

**CHOPIN:** Four Scherzi. Artur Schnabel, pianist. (RCA Victor). Mr. Schnabel has few equals as a Chopin interpreter, and the reissue on LP records of his version of these scherzos cannot be too highly recommended.

—R. E.

**DEBUSSY:** Images, Books 1 and 2. Walter Gieseking, pianist. (Columbia).

**LISZT:** Funérailles; Sonetto del Petrarca No. 104; Valse Oubliée No. 1; Rakoczy March (Hungarian Rhapsody No. 15, arranged by Vladimir Horowitz). Vladimir Horowitz, pianist. (RCA Victor). Some of the pianist's finest performances, and valuable as a memento of his incredible pianism in the rhapsody.

—R. E.

**MOZART:** Sonata in C major, K. 279; Sonata in F major, K. 280. (Florence Raitzin, pianist. (R-E-B). Neat, unaffected performances by a pupil of Wanda Landowska.

—R. E.

**SCHUBERT:** Sonata in B flat major, Op. post. Webster Aitkin, pianist. (EMS). Volume 12 of Mr. Aitkin's series of Schubert recordings. The playing is unusually sensitive, clear, and meaningful.

—R. E.

**SCHUMANN:** Papillons, Op. 2; The Prophet Bird; Toccata. BRAHMS: Intermezzos Op. 117, Nos. 1, 2, and 3; Op. 118, No. 2; Op. 119, No. 1. György Sandor, pianist. (Columbia). Poetic, finely-etched interpretations.

—R. E.

### Organ

**BACH:** The Art of Fugue. Fritz Heitmann, organist. (Capitol). Mr. Heitmann follows the edition of Wolfgang Graeser. He plays only twelve of the fugues and canons, arguing (wrongly, I think) that all of them would overstrain the listener. He plays Nos. 1, 4, 13, 5, 12, 7, 14, 9, 16, 11, 15, and 19 of the Graeser edition, in that order, ending with the chorale, Vor deinen Thron tret' ich hiermit. For this recording he chose the organ of the Berlin Dom Crypt, built in 1946 "according to the tonal principles of Bach's time." This is not one of the distinguished German organist's best performances.

—R. S.

**ORGAN REVERIES.** Virgil Fox, organist. (Columbia). Includes works by Brahms, Humperdinck, Boccherini, Dvorak, Saint-Saëns, Bingham, Bach, Böhm, Rubinstein, and Mendelssohn.

**SATIE:** Messe des Pauvres. SCHÖNBERG: Variations on a Recitative. Marilyn Mason, organist; chorus directed by David Randolph. (Esoteric). It would be hard to find a slighter work than the Satie mass. The Schönberg Variations, on the other hand, belong clearly in the grand historic line of German organ literature. Miss Mason plays both pieces clearly and without affectation.

—C. S.

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# NEW MUSIC REVIEWS

## American Chamber Works Are Made Available

Four contemporary American chamber works of uncommon merit have been handsomely published by Mercury Music Corporation. The most striking of these is probably Leon Kirchner's String Quartet (1949). Coming from a man in his early thirties, it is literally astonishing for its craftsmanship and maturity. It ranges in technique from the quasi-atonal polyphonic patterns of Bartók to occasional suggestions of more extreme twelve-tone devices; but, as in Bartók's compositions, the musical substance is controlled within clear formal procedures. The string-writing is uncompromising. It is vastly difficult to execute, but its imaginativeness and variety more than compensate. This work stands with the best of young composers anywhere.

Charles Jones' String Quartet No. 2 (1944) is another first-class job of composing. More modest in scope, it is conceived in the international neoclassical idiom that has reached its peak during the past twenty years. Jones' style is lyrical, diatonic, economical; the contrapuntal workmanship is simple but sure. The exposed string-writing and the careful chord-spacing would suggest that it is difficult to execute.

The String Quartet (1940) of Ellis B. Kohs is soundly-built and well-schooled in the string idiom. If it is rather loose of style and conventional in instrumental combinations, its achievement is nonetheless solid. Robert Starer's Quartet (1947) is also the work of a composer who knows his business; the working ideas are generally undistinguished, however, and the harmonic combinations, chromatic in a disturbing way, tend to move aimlessly.

—W. F.

## A Long Choral Work By Norman Dello Joio

Norman Dello Joio's A Psalm of David (Carl Fischer) is an extended work for mixed chorus, brass, strings, and percussion. A prefatory note explains that the piece is based on a remarkably austere, eight-note *cantus firmus*, first used by Josquin des Pres in a setting of the same psalm. Dello Joio's way with the theme is described in detail; his reasons for using it to begin with might have been

even more interesting. At any rate, the work embodies certain regrettable inclinations of the composer's current practice—a bland, facile harmonic style; a curiously square, clichéd solution to rhythmic problems; the implied assumption that just about any quickly-contrived series of notes is sufficient impetus for a melodic line. The choral writing suggests medieval church style by its plentitude of open sounds—fourths, fifths and octaves. It has clearly been calculated for, and will undoubtedly achieve, a splendid, powerful sonority. The work is provided with two texts, the Latin of the Vulgate and an adaptation of the King James Version.

—W. F.

## Songs

BERGER, ARTHUR: Three Poems of Yeats from Words for Music, Perhaps. (Medium, C to F sharp). (New Music). These fine poems do not seem to add up to successful material for a song group. Apart from that, the songs, with flute, clarinet, and cello accompaniment, are affectingly lyrical, arresting in texture and nicely turned for the voice.

—W. F.

## For Clarinet

CHOPIN: Etude, Op. 10, No. 3, and Valse, Op. 64, No. 1, arranged for B flat clarinet and piano by Gustave Langenus. (Carl Fischer).

## For Violin

NORDEN, HUGO: Concertino in G, violin or clarinet and piano. (Schmidt). KOUTZEN, BORIS: Foundation of Violin Playing. (Mercury).

## For Orchestra

BALLANTINE, EDWARD: Mary and the Lamb Forever, March in the style of Sousa. (Schmidt). JACOB, GORDON: Fantasia on the Alleluia Hymn. (Williams). McKAY, GEORGE F.: Music of the Americas, Suites for Strings. (C. C. Birchard). MENDELSSOHN: A Midsummer Night's Dream, study and conducting format. (Southern). MOEHLMANN, R. L.: Pizzicato Pete, Novelty for Strings. (Carl Fischer).

## For Trumpet

MENDEZ, RAFAEL: Samba; Jota; Hejre Kati (arranged from Hubay), for trumpet and piano. (Carl Fischer).

## For Voice (Teaching)

STAFFORD, JO: Easy Lessons in Singing with Hints for Vocalists. (Carl Fischer).

## For Band

BOHM, CARL: Perpetual Motion, arr.

## First Performances in New York Concerts

### Orchestra Works

Mills, Charles: Theme and Variations (New York Philharmonic-Symphony, Nov. 8). Rieti, Vittorio: Sinfonia No. 5 (National Orchestral Association, Nov. 12). Schuman, William: Symphony No. 6 (Philadelphia Orchestra, Nov. 13). Wigglesworth, Frank, Jr.: Summer Scenes (Little Orchestra Society, Nov. 5).

### Concertos

Foss, Lukas: Piano Concerto No. 2 (Boston Symphony, Nov. 17). Freed, Isadore: Concerto for Violin and Orchestra (National Orchestral Association, Nov. 12). Martinu, Bohuslav: Concerto for Two Violins and Orchestra (Little Orchestra Society, Nov. 5).

### Opera

Schönberg, Arnold: Erwartung (New York

by Merle J. Isaac. (Carl Fischer). CASTELLUCCI, LOUIS: U. S. and You, March. (Carl Fischer).

## Composers Corner

Gian-Carlo Menotti's Apocalypse was given its first performance on Oct. 19 by the Pittsburgh Symphony under the direction of Victor de Sabata, who commissioned the work. Hans Schwieger conducted the Kansas City Philharmonic in the premiere of Alexander Tcherepnin's Romantic Overture on Oct. 23. Nov. 5 was designated John Powell Day by John S. Battle, governor of Virginia, and, as part of the tribute to the Virginia composer, the National Symphony, conducted by Howard Mitchell, played John Powell's Symphony in A in a Richmond concert.

The Association of Dutch Composers is celebrating its fortieth anniversary this year with a series of orchestral and chamber-music concerts in Amsterdam, The Hague, and Utrecht. During a recent Concertgebouw Orchestra promenade concert, Jan Felderhof conducted the first performance of his Symphony. Ildebrando Pizzetti, Italian composer, wrote the score for the motion picture Mill on the Po.

The Society of American Musicians, in Chicago, presented a program of Leo Sowerby's compositions at the Cliff Dwellers Club on Oct. 30. The works performed included Three Folk Song Settings, Sonata for Trumpet and Piano, and three piano pieces. Norman Dello Joio's The Mystic Trumpeter, for mixed chorus, soloists, and French Horn, had two performances on Nov. 11, Armistice Day. One was given by the choir of the National Presbyterian Church in Washington, D. C., under the direction of Theodore Schaefer, and the other was included a program of the composer's works that was presented at Yale University. Other works in the Yale concert included A Jubilant Song, for mixed chorus; two scenes from the opera The Triumph of Joan; Sonata No. 3, for piano; Variations and Capriccio, for violin and piano; and three songs. Mr. Dello Joio appeared as pianist in the songs and the violin work.

WCFM Recording Corporation has released a long-playing record devoted to chamber music by Mary Howe. Her Suite for String Quartet and Piano, Interlude between Two Pieces, for flute and piano, and Three Pieces after Emily Dickinson are played by the Chamber Arts Society of Catholic University of America.

Ellis Kohs's Symphony No. 1, for small orchestra, will be given its first performance this month by the San Francisco Symphony. It was commissioned by Pierre Monteux, who will introduce it. The composer's String Quartet (1940) will be played in Los Angeles next March by the Hollywood String Quartet. Edwin McArthur will conduct the Harrisburg Symphony, with W. Dewey Williamson as soloist, in the first performance of John La Montaine's Ode for Oboe and Orchestra this month.



Ben Greenhaus

## NEW CONCERTO

Isadore Freed examines the score of his Violin Concerto with Bela Urban and Leon Barzin, who were soloist and conductor for its premiere on Nov. 12 in a National Orchestral Association concert

This work was commissioned by the orchestra.

Henry Sopkin, conductor of the Atlanta Symphony, has commissioned Don Gillis to compose an orchestral work. Karol Rathaus' Diapasona, a work for mixed chorus, baritone solo, and orchestra based on a text drawn from the writings of Dryden and Milton, will be performed next spring by the Queens College Choral Society, which commissioned it. The composer recently completed the score for a full-length documentary film produced by the Israeli government. The film, Out of Evil, will be shown in the United States.

## Boyd Neel Orchestra To Make American Tour

The Boyd Neel Orchestra will make its first tour of the United States and Canada in the fall of 1952, under the auspices of Columbia Artists Management. The visit will coincide with the twentieth anniversary of the English ensemble, which bears the name of its founder and conductor. The orchestra has six first violins, four second violins, three violas, three cellos, a double bass, two oboes, and two horns. The tour will open in Canada on Oct. 6 and will end late in November with a concert at Town Hall in New York.

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MUSICAL AMERICA



## Chile

(Continued from page 8)

Foke, a Dutch composer and a resident of Chile for several years, were notable for their deep musicality and technical accuracy throughout the festival.

Roberto Puelma, another prize-winner in the first festival, was represented this time by two major works, *Sinfonia Abajena* and a string quartet. His style is rather traditional and conventionally melodic. In the symphony, he employs his skill as an orchestrator and his mastery of construction to integrate folk materials in a large symphonic form. The influences of late romanticism are also apparent in his music. Carlos Isamitt also employs folk elements in *Mito Araucano*—folk music of the now rare Chilean Indians. He often uses these materials in his works, which are written in twelve-tone style. His earlier *Frisco Araucano*, for two solo voices and orchestra, was a more fortunate attempt than *Mito Araucano*. Acario Cotapos, a highly interesting and original personality, who for a long time has lived in Paris, offered a vigorous and buoyant work, the *Preliminar Symphony*, drawn from the opera he is currently writing, *El Pájaro Burlón* (The Mocking Bird).

Alfonso Letelier, winner of two prizes in the first festival, was represented this time by one of his lesser works for voice and piano. The veteran Enrique Soro, who at the beginning of the century was a pioneer in "pure" music in a musical society dominated by amateurish views and a blind devotion to Italian opera, played his *Three Elegiac Preludes* for Piano, which are improvisational in character.

A new talent was greeted in Carlos Botto, author of a set of *Variations for Piano*, which revealed a real creative gift. Two women composers, both at the beginning of their composing careers, revealed genuine talent. Sylvia Soublette disclosed, in the *Suite Pastoril*, for soprano, tenor, flute, viola and harp, a preference for idyllic and pastoral moods in a style which crosses the music of the eighteenth century with that of impressionism. Leni Alexander, in *Three Songs*, for mezzo-soprano and small string orchestra with obbligato wind instruments, to verses by Rabindranath Tagore, revealed an inclination for recitative treatment of the voice part and for somber colors in her strictly atonal music.

## Austrian Groups Plan European Tours

VIENNA. — Three Austrian ensembles are making tours outside their native land this season. The orchestra of the Salzburg Mozarteum, conducted by Bernhard Baumgartner, was heard in eight Italian cities during the month of November. The Vienna Symphony is scheduled to tour Turkey, Greece, and Egypt, next February. Herbert von Karajan is expected

to conduct. The chamber orchestra of the Vienna Konzerthausgesellschaft is giving concerts in Italy, southern France, Spain, and Portugal, during November and December.

## Charlotte Symphony To Give Six Programs

CHARLOTTE, N. C. — The Charlotte Symphony opened its 1951-52 subscription series of six pairs of concerts on Oct. 29 and 30. The orchestra is in its nineteenth season, and James Christian Pfohl in his third as its conductor. The ensemble, increased to sixty players this year, includes members of the music faculties and student bodies of local and neighboring schools, as well as business and professional men and women.

Gina Bachauer was the soloist in the first program, playing Tchaikovsky's *First Piano Concerto*. The Vivaldi-Giannini *D minor Concerto Grosso*, Op. 3, No. 11, and Heikki Soulahti's *Sinfonia Piccola* completed the program. The *sinfonia* is the only extant work of a Finnish composer who died in 1938 at the age of seventeen. It was given its American premiere last summer at the Transylvania Music Camp, with Thor Johnson conducting.

Other soloists with the orchestra this season will be Suzanne Danco; Ruggiero Ricci; Andrew White, baritone, of the Drake University faculty; and Louise Nelson Pfohl, pianist and wife of the conductor.

## Omaha Concert Hall Celebrates Anniversary

OMAHA. — The Joslyn Memorial Art Museum celebrates its twentieth anniversary this season, which had as its opening event, on Oct. 28, a program by the Fine Arts Ensemble. Howard Hanson was guest of honor for the occasion, when his *String Quartet* was played, along with works by Beethoven and Fauré. Members of the ensemble are Emanuel Wishnow and Truman Morsman, violinists; Max Gilbert, violist; Rosemary Madison, cellist; and Gladys May, pianist.

—KATHLEEN SHAW MILLER

## New Jersey Symphony Reaches Thirtieth Year

MONTCLAIR. — The New Jersey Symphony, celebrating its thirtieth anniversary, is giving three pairs of concerts this season, with Samuel Antek as conductor. Eugene List was soloist in the opening program, played in Orange High School on Nov. 26 and in Mt. Hebron High School in Upper Montclair on Nov. 27. A new group, known as the Friends of the New Jersey Symphony, has been formed in an effort to increase the orchestra's budget and extend its activities.

## Swedish Music Surveyed in Pamphlet

The Swedish magazine *Musikrevy* has issued a fifty-cent pamphlet in English called *Music of the North*. The first of a projected series of international editions, the pamphlet includes articles on The Music of the Lapps, Musical Life in Eighteenth-Century Sweden, Johan Helmich Roman, Creative Music in Sweden 1900-1950, Hilding Rosenberg's *The Revelation of St. John*, Gösta Nyström as a Symphonist, and An Introduction to Dag Wirén. The pamphlet is published in collaboration with the Swedish Institute for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries and the Society of Swedish Composers.

## Bordeaux To Hear Early Bizet Opera

BORDEAUX. — Bizet's *Ivan le Terrible*, completed when the composer was 28 and believed destroyed by him, will be staged by the Bordeaux Opera from a manuscript discovered at the Paris Conservatory during the German occupation.

## Wiesbaden Offers Two Stage Premieres

WIESBADEN. — The world premiere of Darius Milhaud's *Le Jeu de Robin et Marion* and Everett Helm's *Adam and Eve*, a Modern Mystery Play, took place in the Hessian State Theatre here on Oct. 28. Both performances were conducted by Mr. Helm.

Milhaud's work is based on the thirteenth-century musical play by Adam de la Halle, who wrote both text and music. The original has often been called the first operetta because it first alternated spoken dialogue with musical numbers. Milhaud has adapted the music in contemporary style for solo singers and chamber orchestra (flute, clarinet, saxophone, violin, and cello) and has composed new music in the form of an overture, interludes, and dances.

The American composer's stage piece is a modern adaptation of a twelfth-century mystery play, in which the anonymous text is interspersed with choral music in the style of Gregorian chant. Helm has preserved the text and the original music intact, harmonizing the plainsong melodies, and he has composed interludes and ballet music in a thoroughly contemporary style. It was presented in modern dress. The score calls for soloist, small chorus, and chamber orchestra (flute, clarinet, trumpet, violin, viola, cello, and percussion).

## Bach Festival Held in Bremen

BREMEN. — The 28th in the series of Bach Festivals instituted by the Neue Bach Gesellschaft, and the first to take place in Western Germany since the war, was held in Bremen in the middle of September. Although the Bach organization has its headquarters in the Russian zone, only five percent of the four hundred people who attended the festival came from there. Richard Liesche was the musical director of the event.

Mr. Liesche conducted a performance of the B minor Mass, as well as several motets, sung by the Cathedral Choir. The *Passion According to St. Matthew* was presented by a forty-voice choir. In forming the accompanying ensemble two strings were used for each wind instrument, and it included recorders, a viola da gamba, and two chamber organs, which were used for the continuo. Günther Ramin, the present Cantor of St. Thomas's in Leipzig, conducted the *Goldberg Variations* and, from the harpsichord, the *Wedding Cantata*, O holder Tag.

Organ recitals were given by Helmut Wacha, now recording the complete organ works of Bach for the Deutsche Gramophon Gesellschaft, and Fritz Heitmann.

## City Ballet

(Continued from page 9)

chine's *Serenade*, in which Miss Reed, Diana Adams, and Nicholas Magallanes danced especially movingly; and Jerome Robbins' *Age of Anxiety*, with Tanaquil LeClercq, who created the leading feminine role, taking it back from Nora Kaye, who had replaced her in September when a leg injury forced her onto the sidelines. *Symphony in C* finished the evening with a handsome flourish. Leon Barzin's orchestra, as nearly always, played exceedingly well.

—C. S.

## Novelties Repeated

On the afternoon of Nov. 18 the New York City Ballet repeated two of the season's novelties, George Balanchine's new ballet, *Tyl Ulenspiegel*, and his revival of *Apollo*, Leader of the Muses. The program opened with William Dollar's *The Duel* and closed with Balanchine's *Bourrée Fantasque*. The solo dancers were in best form; the corps less brilliant and sure of itself.

Melissa Hayden was superb in *The Duel*. Jerome Robbins kept the pageantry of *Tyl Ulenspiegel* alive. Maria Tallchief, Tanaquil LeClercq, and Diana Adams were a composite dream of loveliness in the crystalline choreography of *Apollo*, with André Egilevsky again in the title role. The soloists in *Bourrée Fantasque* were, as before, Miss LeClercq and Mr. Robbins; Nora Kaye and Nicholas Magallanes; and Janet Reed and Herbert Bliss.

—R. S.

## Opera Series in English Opened by Cooper Union

The Cooper Union Forum, in cooperation with the American Guild of Musical Artists and the American Federation of Labor, began a free series of performances, under the title *Opera in English*, in the union's Great Hall on Oct. 19. Rossini's *The Barber of Seville*, in George Mead's adaptation, was the initial presentation. Like the other productions, it was given in costume, with piano accompaniment. Leopold Sachse was in charge of the general direction; Siegfried Landau was the musical director; and Hedda Ballon was the pianist. The costuming was under the guidance of Kate Friedheim. Members of the guild made up the cast of the opera, which included Marjorie Gordon as Rosina, Madeleine Vose as Bertha, David Benedict as Almaviva, Bernard Green as Figaro, Lawrence Davidson as Bartolo, Robert Anderson as Basilio, Donald White as Fiorello, and Sam Cacharian as Ambrosio. For its second opera in the series, the forum presented Mozart's *The Magic Flute*.

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## EDUCATION

**Opera Futures**, a workshop under the direction of Lee Shaynen and Carlos Alexander, will hold its first six-week session from Jan. 7 to Feb. 16. Musical and dramatic coaching, ensemble singing, make-up, history of opera, languages, and solfège will be taught; vocal instruction, however, will not be given. There will be a public performance at the end of the session.

**The Queens College Music Department** is sponsoring a series of three free lectures on the relation of music and drama during the current semester. Herbert Grossman, assistant musical director of NBC television opera, spoke on television and opera on Nov. 16; on Dec. 7, Douglas Moore, composer and teacher at Columbia University, will discuss music and the modern theatre, and Richard Rodgers, musical-comedy composer, will talk about his work on Dec. 14.

**The Leschetizky Association of America** will present two artist-student recitals this season. It will hold its biennial contest for piano pupils of association members in April. The winner of the contest will be awarded a New York recital debut.

**The American Guild of Organists** has announced that forty organists have completed guild examinations successfully this year. Five were awarded fellowship certificates, 24 were given associate certificates, and eleven received choirmaster certificates. Fifteen regional conventions have been held this year in preparation for the 1952 national convention, which will meet in San Francisco next summer.

**Alice M. Ditson Opera Workshop Scholarships** have been given to Philomena Mendus, soprano, and Donald Meissner, tenor. Willard Rhodes is director of the Columbia University workshop.

**The National Federation of Music Clubs** is offering \$500 in prizes in its tenth annual young composers contests. A prize of \$250 will be given for a work, at least ten minutes long, scored for three to five instruments of which the piano may be one; \$150 will be awarded for a composition for piano and a single wind or string instrument; and \$100 will be given for a choral work for mixed voices. The contest is open to any United States citizen who will have reached his sixteenth, but not have passed his 26th, birthday by the closing date for the receipt of manuscripts, March 15, 1952. The age limit will be extended somewhat for veterans of the armed forces. Entry blanks and contest details may be secured from Halsey Stevens, contest chairman, University of Southern California, Los Angeles 7, Calif.

**The Voccoli Choral Society**, directed by Louise Voccoli, gave a concert at Mount Carmel House in New York City on Nov. 9.

**The Greenwich House Music School** presented Michel Chauveton, violinist, on Nov. 16, and Cathalene Parker, mezzo-soprano, on Nov. 23, in its current series of free guest-artist recitals. Miss Parker appeared in a program devoted to the compositions of Sam Raphael, a member of the school's piano faculty, who also played some of his piano works.

**Harvard University's** Charles Eliot Norton Professor of Poetry for 1951-52 is Aaron Copland, who gave the first of his six lectures in Sanders Theatre on Nov. 13. The lecture was followed by a concert in which Arthur Gold and Robert Fizdale, duo-

pianists, and Patricia Neway, soprano, performed music by Berlioz, Bizet, and Stravinsky. During the spring term, Mr. Copland will teach a course—Music in the Twenties—in Harvard College.

**The University of Southern California School of Music**, Raymond Kendall, dean, has instituted a required concert-music course in which all music majors will hear nine concerts by the Los Angeles Philharmonic, three concerts in the Los Angeles Music Guild series, two programs in the Evenings on the Roof series, and one by the Harold Byrns Chamber Orchestra, in addition to eleven concerts on the university campus. Through a special arrangement, the cost to the students will be that of only one-half credit unit per semester. In addition to attending the concerts, students will be required to pass three examinations based on them to receive credit. The school has also formed the Bovard String Quartet, a resident ensemble that will perform and teach chamber music. The personnel includes Sascha Jacobsen, first violinist; Glenn Swan, second violinist; Sanford Schonbach, violist; and Stephen De'ak, cellist. On Dec. 5 Carl Ebert will direct the first Pacific Coast performance of Menotti's *The Consul*. The opera, which will be given in Bovard Auditorium, will be repeated on Dec. 8.

**The 1952 Thor Johnson Brass Composition Contest**, open to students in music schools throughout the United States, Canada, and Mexico, will award prizes of \$200, \$100, and \$50 for works composed for brass ensembles. The compositions, which may be written for any combination of ten to fifteen instruments, should not be more than ten minutes in length. Entries should be submitted to Luther A. Richman, Cincinnati Conservatory of Music, Highland Ave. and Oak St., Cincinnati, Ohio, by March 17, 1952.

**The Cleveland Institute of Music**, Beryl Rubinstein, director, opened a series of twelve weekly broadcasts over WTAM on Nov. 13. Marcel Dick conducted the Institute Symphony in a half-hour program of works by Vivaldi, Schubert, and Mendelssohn. Succeeding programs will be given by the Choral Ensemble, the Children's Chorus, and the Children's Orchestra.

**The University of Oklahoma School of Music** has appointed Richard Rivers, baritone, to its faculty. Mr. Rivers was a member of the New York City Opera Company in 1945 and a soloist with the Robert Shaw Chorale in its 1948-49 tour.

**The University of Texas School of Fine Arts** has acquired the chamber-music collection of the late Adolfo Betti, former leader of the Flonzaley String Quartet.

**The University of Chicago** presented Gustave Reese, musicologist and author of *Music in the Middle Ages*, in a Colver-Rosenberger lecture on Nov. 13. Mr. Reese's subject was *The Potential Influence of Musicology on the Writings of Political and Cultural Histories*.

**James Millikin University's** chapter of Sigma Alpha Iota will present an all-student production of Strauss's *Fledermaus* on Feb. 29 and March 1.

**The New England Conservatory of Music** has granted Leland Procter, composer and teacher of theoretical subjects, a leave of absence for one year to accept a Ford Foundation fellowship. Mr. Procter is composing and studying at Harvard University. Charles Munch, conductor of the Boston Symphony, has been elected a member of the conservatory's board of trustees.

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## BOOKS

### A Plan for Opera in American Cities

OPERA FOR THE PEOPLE. By Herbert Graf. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. 1951.

In August, 1934, Herbert Graf came to the United States, after some years' experience as régisseur of a variety of European opera houses, to serve as stage director for the first (and, as matters turned out, the only) season of opera given in Philadelphia under the auspices of the Philadelphia Orchestra. He quickly found that nobody concerned with the project had the slightest notion of the practical difficulties of giving opera. The orchestra manager and the two conductors involved in the project were away on vacation. The Academy of Music was dark, and would remain so, Mr. Graf was told, until Leopold Stokowski arrived to begin concert rehearsals on the first of October. There was no technical director; none had been engaged, nor had the heads of the various backstage departments. The one thing that was ready was a model for a setting for Act I of Tristan and Isolde, designed by the sculptor Archipenko. It was handsome, but it allowed too little space for the actors.

Somehow Mr. Graf managed to get the season under way. Archipenko was discarded in favor of the more practical Donald Oenslager. Heads of technical departments materialized at the last moment. Although the Academy of Music, which the orchestra did not then own, was seldom available for rehearsal at the most desirable times, the performances finally got on the stage. But the whole process was so wasteful that the deficit at the end of the season was staggering, and the enterprise was dropped for good and all.

A year and a half later, Mr. Graf moved to the Metropolitan Opera. Here, of course, he found a permanent organization accustomed to preparing and staging opera performances. But many of the hampering factors of the Philadelphia season were still present—the limited facilities of the Metropolitan building, the shortage of rehearsal time, the constant necessity for taking short-cuts instead of preparing productions fully and conscientiously. Yet the Metropolitan then offered, and still continues to offer, the best opportunities available to an operatic stage director in the United States. In spite of disappointments, pressures, and experiences of frustration, Mr. Graf is still at the Metropolitan fifteen years later, and in the 1950-51 season he staged eleven of the 21 operas in the repertoire.

In *Opera for the People*, written out of his extensive experience both here and abroad (where his most recent assignment was at the Florentine Maggio Musicale last spring, to stage Verdi's *I Vespri Siciliani* indoors and Weber's *Oberon* in the romantic outdoor setting of the Boboli Gardens), Mr. Graf assesses the manifold shortcomings of American operatic production, in comparison with the happier results achieved by many of the subsidized opera theatres of Europe. He surveys the traditions and the future potentialities of opera in this country, analyzing the necessities of libretto, music, action, and staging. He lays before the reader the whole panorama of operatic activity in the United States, from the full-scale professional companies in New York and San Francisco to the small touring companies, the civic enterprises, and the school and college workshops. Finally he makes practical recommendations about the constructing of opera theatres, the arranging of schedules, and the financing of community operatic projects.

Many of Mr. Graf's most fruitful

conclusions are contained in a chapter published in advance in the February, 1951, Special Issue of *MUSICAL AMERICA*. In this chapter he presents a detailed blueprint for musical seasons, in cities of various sizes, coordinating the activity of the symphony orchestra with that of the opera-producing organization in a year-round schedule that is advantageous to both. Until the major cities of the country bring orchestral and operatic music together in a single broadly administered program, he feels, the practical situation will continue to be unsatisfactory to both. If local or state subsidy is needed to maintain such projects, it should be forthcoming, he maintains, since nobody anywhere has ever been able to produce opera satisfactorily without incurring a considerable deficit. He envisages, as a result of such financial support, local projects in the chief cities in which eleven-month seasons of orchestral music, opera, light opera, and summer concerts (with a month's annual vacation in September) will keep musicians busy on a year-round basis and provide audiences with a constantly active musical life.

Perhaps this vision cannot be realized readily, or completely, or soon. But Mr. Graf's courage and wisdom are great; for unless the goal is high, only compromise and half-way achievement can result in the end. While he is generous in his appreciation of the work done in operatic workshops, he does not confuse these student activities with genuine professional work; he has seen too much opera well staged and well sung all over the Western world to be willing to propose any but the highest standards for American production. And he believes that we ought to do something to attain those standards, instead of mourning that American artists still, in the 67th season of the Metropolitan, have to go abroad to obtain adequate preliminary training in operatic performance. Mr. Graf's book is both a guide and an exhortation to those who have the best operatic interests of the country at heart.

—CECIL SMITH

### A Century and a Half Of the Theater an der Wien

150 JAHRE THEATER AN DER WIEN. By Anton Bauer. Zurich, Leipzig, and Vienna: Amalthea-Verlag. 1951.

When bombs shattered almost every theatre in Vienna during the last phases of the war, the Theater an der Wien miraculously escaped destruction. This old and outwardly shabby house is a historic temple. Here, for many decades, theatrical events took place that were hardly surpassed by those of any other stage in the German-speaking world. The theatre had housed 4,080 different productions — dramas, comedies, operas, ballets, and operettas — when Mr. Bauer wrote this book. Here some of Mozart's operas were staged for the first time, and such works of Beethoven's as his first two symphonies, the C minor Piano Concerto, and the Violin Concerto were given their premieres. In 1805, the first performance of Fidelio was given here, attended for the most part by uninterested members of the victorious Napoleonic army, which just had occupied the city.

Here Berlioz, Wagner, and Puccini conducted, and Catalani, Lind, Bernhardt, Duse, Sarasate, and Pavlova appeared as guest artists. Betty Fischer, Luise Kartousch, Hubert Marischka, and Richard Tauber were among the great performers in the second great era of Viennese operetta. Earlier, the great triumvirate — Strauss, von Suppé, and Millöcker — reigned at the Theater an der Wien for many years; up to 1900 nearly every season brought premieres of such sparkling works as *Die Fledermaus*.

(Continued on page 34)

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## BOOKS

(Continued from page 33)

maus, Der Bettelstudent, Gasperone, Der Zigeunerbaron, and Der Opernball. The twentieth century saw the modernization of operetta at the hands of Eysler, Fall, and Ascher, and, later, Lehar, Kalman, Oscar Straus, and Benatzky. The silent interlude (during the years of the Nazi regime) came to an end when the Staatsoper, its own house destroyed, took refuge in this theatre, where it still performs.

This unique history of a theatre, with its inevitable financial struggles, has been pieced together with unassuming diligence by Mr. Bauer, a musicologist of the younger generation. Written in lively style the book displays no sentimentality, concentrating upon facts and contemporary verdicts. The illustrations supplementing the written records are admirable.

—ROBERT BREUER

### A Musical Baedeker Of the City of Salzburg

KLINGENDES SALZBURG (A Musical History of the Mozart City). By Viktor Keldorfer. Leipzig, Zurich, and Vienna: Amalthea-Verlag. 1951. \$3.50.

The eminent conductor emeritus of the Vienna Männergesangverein and Schubertbund pays tribute in this illustrated volume to the 1,100-year history of Salzburg, the famous Festspiel-Stadt, which has been the cradle of so much musical talent and artistic enterprise. The various sections, starting with the eighth century and culminating in the Mozart era, shed new light on many a forgotten personality. The book serves as an excellent guide to visitors at the Salzburg festivals; the well-chosen illustrations, with accompanying descriptions in both German and English, make it a musical Baedeker. But the author's treatment of modern figures is startling. In dealing with the famous people connected with Salzburg he concentrates on Wilhelm Furtwängler and Herbert von Karajan, but omits altogether Bruno Walter and Lotte Lehmann, who to countless people were the incarnation of the spirit of the festival in the days when they were associated with it. A reactionary tendency is apparent in the author's disregard of Arnold Schönberg and his over-emphasis on Bruckner and Strauss, who to him appear to be "modern."

—ROBERT BREUER

### An English Teacher Discusses Voice Training

THE ART AND SCIENCE OF VOICE TRAINING. By F. C. Field-Hyde. London: Oxford University Press. 1950.

Mr. Field-Hyde has taught singing for fifty years, and has done extensive research in the literature of both science and music. The reader has only to turn to the section devoted to registers, for example, in Chapter X, to find a summary of many conflicting theories and a sensible discussion of them. The book also deals with breathing, placing of the voice, vocal diagnosis, specific vocal defects and their treatment, consonants and articulation, and other problems.

—R. S.

### A Scientific Approach To Problems of Singing

YOUR VOICE: APPLIED SCIENCE OF VOCAL ART. By Douglas Stanley. Revised Edition. New York: Pitman Publishing Corporation. 1950. \$6.

The author of this book has done research in co-operation with Bell Telephone Laboratories and Electrical Research Products, Inc. He has received fellowships from the American Acoustical Society and the American Association for the Advancement of

Science. He opens the book with a technical glossary that contains some challenging and amusing definitions.

Mr. Stanley has original notions about many things. He asserts that Lilli Lehmann "knew nothing of science and had almost entirely lost her voice when she started to teach." But it remained for Jean de Reszke, he adds, "to strike the final blow which has been the main cause of the virtual elimination of all great voices from the world today." Such bald assertions are likely to prejudice the reader against the technical sections of the book, which reveal considerable research, if some rather upsetting suggestions.

—R. S.

### Helmann Writes Treatise On Control of Piano Tone

THE CONSCIOUSLY CONTROLLED PIANO TONE. By Jacob N. Helmann. New York: Jacob N. Helmann. 1951. \$3.75.

Jacob N. Helmann believes that piano tone can be controlled, more precisely than many commentators have felt, through the intelligent application of physical and mental procedures. As he puts it, "the motion which determines the character of tone expresses in itself a character analogous to the character of tone it determines. By analyzing the motion more closely we find that the very character of this motion is based fundamentally on the two factors—speed and force—the force (strength) of the movement indicates power; the speed indicates quality." Although he includes many diagrams and musical examples with commentary in this treatise, it would unquestionably be most useful if read in connection with actual study of the method in operation. The author wastes a great deal of space on extraneous discussion and needless quotations and anecdotes, but he offers some stimulating practical ideas about the psychological and practical problems of piano technique and the physical processes involved.

—R. S.

### A New Textbook By Two Teachers

CREATIVE HARMONY AND MUSICIANSHIP. By Howard Ansley Murphy and Edwin John Stringham. New York: Prentice Hall. 1951. \$6.65.

The authors of this text are both professors of music. They have based the work on the premises that theory should be an explanation of the structure of music for appreciative, executive, and creative purposes, based on the literature of the classic and romantic periods; that general principles of structure should emerge from the study of the musical literature and be applied through specific techniques; and that all phases of study should be co-ordinated into a single unified conception of musical structures. The book contains the material presented in first-year college harmony, keyboard, ear-training, and music-reading classes. It has four parts, divided into thirty chapters, one for each academic week.

—R. S.

### A Collection of Songs Of Sailors and Lumbermen

SHANTYMEN AND SHANTYBOYS: SONGS OF THE SAILOR AND LUMBERMAN. Collected and compiled by William Main Doerflinger. New York: Macmillan. 1951. \$8.

The author of this admirable collection feels these songs and understands them. He has worked on ships and he has made friends with the men who sang them. Mr. Doerflinger provides variant versions of the texts, and he gives a vivid description of the backgrounds of the songs. For landlubbers he includes a diagram showing the ship Henry B. Hyde, launched in Bath, Maine, in 1884, with almost everything from bow to rudder identified. The book is well organized and indexed, and handsomely printed.

—R. S.



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2. Rolf Gerard, the scene designer, and Horace Armistead, of the technical staff, examine a model of an *Aida* setting. The figurines are obviously leftovers from Mr. Gerard's models for *Don Carlo* last season.
3. An early principals' rehearsal of *Aida*, with Fausto Cleva at the piano and (left to right) Mr. Vichegonov, Miss Milanov, Miss Nikolaidi, Mr. Del Monaco, and Mr. Hines.
4. Rudolf Bing, with his hands on his hips, and Alberto Erede, the conductor, watch Herbert Graf, the stage director, as he confers with Leonard Warren about a bit of action in the first act of *Rigoletto*.
5. Thelma Votipka (*Giovanna*) and Alois Pernerstorfer (*Sparafucile*) rehearse a *Rigoletto* curtain call.
6. Mr. Warren looks doubtfully at Hilde Gueden (*Gilda*) in the fourth act of *Rigoletto*.
7. Eugene Berman, the designer (left), and Mr. Graf look at a sketch of one of the *Rigoletto* scenes.
8. Mr. Bing taps his foot judiciously as he watches Mr. Warren (pointing) and Paul Franke (*Borsa*) in *Rigoletto*.
9. In preparation for the forthcoming revival of Mozart's *Così Fan Tutte*, a conference enlists Fritz Stiedry, the conductor (seated at the piano), Frank Guarrera (*Guglielmo*), Mr. Bing, and Alfred Lunt, who will direct the production.

(Photographs by Sedge Le Blang)

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